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KEVIN FRAYER/AP
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NO SURPRISE? Senior Writer Brian Bethune offers his opinion on this year's Giller book prize winner and asks: Has the literary award become too predictable? *www.macleans.ca/books*

THE HALO EFFECT The release of *Halo 2* on Xbox marked the biggest video game launch to date. *Macleans.ca* Editor Derek Chezzi dissects the hype in our gaming section. *www.macleans.ca/gaming*

INKLESS WELLS Columnist Paul Wells's Weblog covers Parliament Hill, jazz and more. *www.macleans.ca/paulwells*

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Maclean's, established 1905, is published weekly, except for occasional combined, expanded or premium issues, which count as two subscription issues, by Rogers Publishing, One Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 2Y5. Montreal office: 1200 avenue McGill College, Bureau 800, Montreal, Que. H3B 4G7

Contents Copyright© 2004 by Rogers Publishing Limited, may not be reprinted without permission. *Maclean's* ISSN 0024-9262. Full subscription prices for one year, including taxes: $60.15 (GST); $65.18 (HST/QST) U.S.A. $90.00 surface; all other countries $215.00 airmail.

CANADIAN POSTMASTER: Undeliverable copies and change of address notices to: *Maclean's*, PO Box 960, Station Main, Markham, Ont. L3P 8H8. Publications Mail Agreement No. 40070230. Registration No. 08073.

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP) and the Canada Magazine Fund, toward our mailing and editorial costs.

U.S. POSTMASTER: Periodicals postage paid at Buffalo, NY. USPS 106710. Send address changes (form 3579) to *Maclean's*, P.O. Box 4541, Buffalo, NY 14240. Printed in Canada by Quebecor World Inc.



FRANK GUNN/CP



THOSE NICE AMERICANS

It's been a bad patch for Canada-U.S. relations. Is George W. Bush fixing that?

I RAN INTO someone recently who I considered a friend for many years. Then he burned me on an issue and, as a result, I ceased communication with him. But when we bumped into each other after a long absence, we said hello, shook hands, and had a brief chat. I haven't forgotten what he did but, eventually, you have to drive on, and put things behind you.

I mention that because, to some extent, Canada is going through the same thing now in terms of our relationship with the United States. It's been a great friendship, but lately even the best-intentioned people on both sides admit we're going through a rough patch. Canadians feel we have lots of reasons to be annoyed at the U.S.—or, more specifically, the White House—but we're good at causing umbrage as well as taking it. Never mind, for a moment, the things Americans do that frustrate us: we know all that. Consider instead how things look from the American side. Start with the gratuitous advice we routinely offer them on how to conduct their politics; the overt dislike and disrespect we display toward George W. Bush, the president they just re-elected; the insensitivity we demonstrate to the pain they endure every time another of their soldiers dies in Iraq; and the near obsession we have with pointing out to the world that we're *not* like Americans. (And yes, you read some of that in this magazine, and at times in this space.)

But there also comes a time, in politics as well as in personal life, when you have to put things behind you, and right now, the Bush White House seems to be doing that. The President's people, including outgoing Ambassador Paul Cellucci, say there are plans for a Bush visit to Ottawa—something he never did in his first term—and that they want it sooner, rather than later. Political leaders don't do anything out of pure altruism, and there are obviously things Bush wants, including the contentious issue of Canadian participation in their missile shield program. He'll also be looking for a willingness on Paul Martin's part to strengthen our border security, and that's something we shouldn't even debate: American concerns on that issue are justified and understandable, and our real choice is whether we want to be inside their security wall, or on the outside, looking in. At the top of our list should be an end to the continuing, unfair and devastating U.S. ban on Canadian beef.

> **Our real choice is whether we want to be inside the U.S. security wall, or on the outside, looking in**

A good part of our content in this issue focuses on different aspects of the U.S.-Canada relationship. Peter C. Newman (page 39) reflects on the entrenchment of the religious right as a major force in American politics, and the fallout effect on Canada. Don Coxe (page 40) foresees a continuing rise of the Canadian dollar right up to par with the American greenback—and explains why that may not be great news for all Canadians; and Paul Wells on the Back Page writes about a more cheering new trend: the Brain Drain is an expression coming back in vogue again—but this time, Canada is the recipient. In short, some of the perceptions that have driven and defined Canada-U.S. relations in recent years are shifting—or have become obsolete. A perfect time for our two leaders to put aside past differences and misconceptions, and drive on into the future.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

response@macleans.ca to comment on The Editor's Letter

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BUICK

'Because of the election results, we the people in the "smart" states request that Canada take us in. We are refugees in our own country.' —Peter Scott Cameron, Valatie, N.Y.

In defence of Lady Black

I find it difficult to understand why someone of the stature of Peter C. Newman should be so pathologically obsessed with Barbara Amiel that he would devote a substantial passage of his autobiography to her and her husband ("Barbara's world," Cover, Nov. 8). His attacks almost read like those of a jilted lover, unless one assumes that he is merely driven by envy of the couple's wealth and extravagant lifestyle.

M. K. Kremer, Guelph, Ont.

So, Barbara Amiel's first *Maclean's* article was titled "Let's bring back debtors' prisons"? Splendid idea! Normally, I find Ms. Amiel's opinions loathsome, idiotic, superfluous and indefensible, but in this case I couldn't agree more. We should bring those old Dickensian workhouses back right away and invite her and her husband to inaugurate one—as its very first inmates. I hear they owe the people at Hollinger a lot of "borrowed" money that they're not willing to pay back. If that's not grounds for debtors' imprisonment, what is?

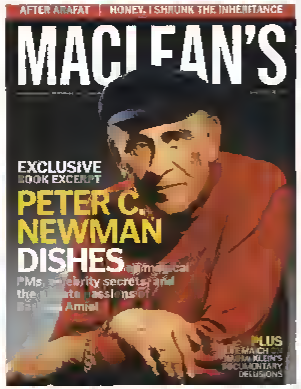
Sabina Becker, Cobourg, Ont.

I usually enjoy Peter C. Newman's articles and cannot recall a single column by Barbara Amiel that I have been able to find any common ground in. That said, Newman's profile of her in his memoirs smacks of sexism and unreferenced tabloid smut. Spending excesses and irresponsible behaviours are one thing, but this entire piece exalts in Amiel's overt sexuality. I can't believe that there aren't men in the Canadian establishment with equally prominent sexual sides.

C.A. Jones, Waterloo, Ont.

It beggars belief that Barbara Amiel is responsible for the fall of Conrad Black by her public delight in prodigious consumption, as Peter C. Newman implies in excerpts from his latest book. Newman would have us believe that an addiction to the wares of a Spanish shoemaker brought down the House of Black. Don't forget that Conrad himself contributed mightily to his own downfall by indulging in large helpings of old-fashioned greed.

Marilyn Callahan, Victoria



Leave such low level gossip to the tabloids and get on with reporting stories that affect the lives of ordinary Canadians.

D.A. Boulton, Calgary

So, the most articulate and opinionated Canadian polemicist of her generation, Peter C. Newman says, gets this kind of treatment by her colleagues in the same magazine she contributed to for close to four decades. Newman-esque the editor called it? Cheap is more like it.

Louis Stock, Boucherville, Que.

Hearts, not minds | How to win votes and influence campaigns

Political analysts may have a lot to learn from George W. Bush's re-election. He proved that you don't need to be a deep thinker, or a skilled debater, to triumph. "Bush may not speak clearly to intellectuals, but he knows how to reach ordinary people," writes Sudhir Jain of Calgary. "He showed that in order to win, you have to touch their hearts, not just impress their minds."

I have to wonder if Peter C. Newman realizes how mild his words are when speaking of the British embarrassment and disgust over these two. We Canadians, as well, are disgusted with the goings-on of this pompous pair of nobodies who believe their lives are worthy of admiration. Let both of them descend into ignominy where they rightfully belong.

Walter Frewen, Surrey, B.C.

We the people

They re-elected George Bush, if you can believe that! This is the guy who lied his way into a war that is killing many young Americans, won the presidency questionably last time, blew a huge budget surplus, lost a million or so jobs, divided the country down the middle, ignores the needs of the environment and made the U.S. the most hated country in the western hemisphere ("The right makes might," Politics, Nov. 15). Just give them a few slogans, some fear mongering, same ol' mantra day after day, and they'll vote for anybody—even if he might well be the most dangerous man in the world.

Larry Harris, Wetaskiwin, Alta.

I am happy that the powerful media and entertainment industries were not successful in their attempts to manipulate the election results. They campaigned strongly and desperately against President Bush. Please, may they now understand that the ordinary person is decent, not narrow, and wants to live in a society with commonsense moral values. Is it too much to hope that Canadian politicians and judiciary will also take note?

Debbie Johnson, Lyon, France

Canadians have an opportunity and obligation, now more than ever, to reinforce our distinct identity in stark contrast to the ideology of the Bush administration.

Martha McAlister, Nanaimo, B.C.

In-depth criticism

In his article "Naomi Klein's tired tricks," Steve Maich is so intent on skewering the "celebrity socialist" that he misleads readers in much the same way he accuses Klein of distorting the truth in her film *The Take* (All Business, Nov. 8). The tragic story of Argentina's economic decline and collapse deserves a more rigorous analysis than either Klein or Maich has given it. But it is misleading for Maich



to credit the IMF for any resurgence in the Argentine economy. Infant mortality rates may have dropped between 1960 and 2002, but that is true of developing countries all over the world. And can Maich really establish a connection between IMF policies and lending with improved economic indicators in Argentina? Maybe it's time for Maich to give up movie reviews and plunge back into his World Development Reports.

Ann Thomson Ottawa

I was very happy to read Steve Maich's critique of Naomi Klein's movie. As a Carleton University student, I cannot pass a wall without seeing promotions for this film and a visit by "delegates" from Argentina, promoting their system—among the many Marxist and socialist causes highlighted. Your article was a breath of fresh air.

Erika Burgess, Ottawa

Innovative oversights

In your "Leaders and dreamers" special issue on Canadian innovators, you wrongly write that Tommy Douglas opposed Canada's entry into the Second World War ("Builders and rebels," The Innovative Urge, Politics). In fact, J. S. Woodsworth was the lone CCFer who voted to oppose the war.

Don Robertson, Nanaimo, B.C.

It's inevitable in a project meant to highlight great Canadians that some get left out, it is a testament to the breadth of our talent that this is the case. While I do not debate any of the selections included in Terry Mosher's article on cartoons ("Drawn and quartered," Arts & Entertainment, Cartoons), I was disappointed nevertheless in three significant omissions: Todd McFarlane—the Alberta lad who created Spawn, one of North America's most hotly marketed comic book characters, Ben Wicks—one of Toronto's best-known gag and political comic strip artists, and Richard Comely—the creator of Captain Canuck and his sidekicks Redcoat and Kebec. This is not to mention the bevy of animators Canada has produced who created Nelvana, and those who produced several of Disney's most successful films.

Michael Clifton, Waterloo, Ont.

Day care divisions

Canada's tax laws discriminate against couples who choose to raise their own children at home ("Lessons in daycare," Politics, Nov. 8). Instead of subsidizing institutionalized child care, the government should reform the tax laws and let parents decide for themselves whether to raise their own children or send them to an institution.

Alan Dill, Moose Jaw, Sask.

The federal government should not be working on a plan to allow mothers of preschool children to work. What it should be doing is finding a way to make it financially possible for one parent to stay home to take care of their own children. The future of our society depends on it.

Pam McInnes, Ariss, Ont.

If we can find the money for four second hand submarines, we certainly should find the money for a child care program. Our children are our future, and any government that invests money for the benefit of our children invests in a positive future.

Ed Gabriel, Vancouver



A child care plan aiding mothers wanting to work? Some say the feds should do the opposite

> **We can't afford to pay for proper health care as it is—and now we are to be burdened with universal child care?**

We can't afford proper health care as it is, and now we are to be burdened with universal child care? Child care is not a universal requirement. If you're going to make babies, then be prepared to afford their upbringing. No one is forced to have children, having a family is a choice.

Mike McCabe, Edmonton

As a working single mother, I highly commend Ottawa's efforts to fund quality child care across all provinces. Working parents and parents continuing their education or getting back into the workforce need the support of good quality child-care programs.

Lynne Griffin, North Vancouver, B.C.

War stories remembered

As a veteran of the Second World War and the son of a veteran of the First World War, I commend Peter Mansbridge for his "Pausing to remember" column that recalls the heroic stories of those Canadians who fought in past wars (Mansbridge on the Record, Nov. 8). It is as beautiful and moving a tribute as I have ever read.

Peter Perry, Collingwood, Ont.

I wish to thank and commend Peter Mansbridge and *Maclean's* for the thoughtful and inspiring article regarding Canadian Victoria Cross recipient Lewis Honey. Honey was my grandfather's brother—a great uncle whom I, unfortunately, never knew. He, like so many Canadian soldiers, served his country with honour and paid the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the freedom which we all enjoy today. Our family is proud of his war-time heroism, though saddened we did not know him personally.

Bruce Lennie, Ottawa

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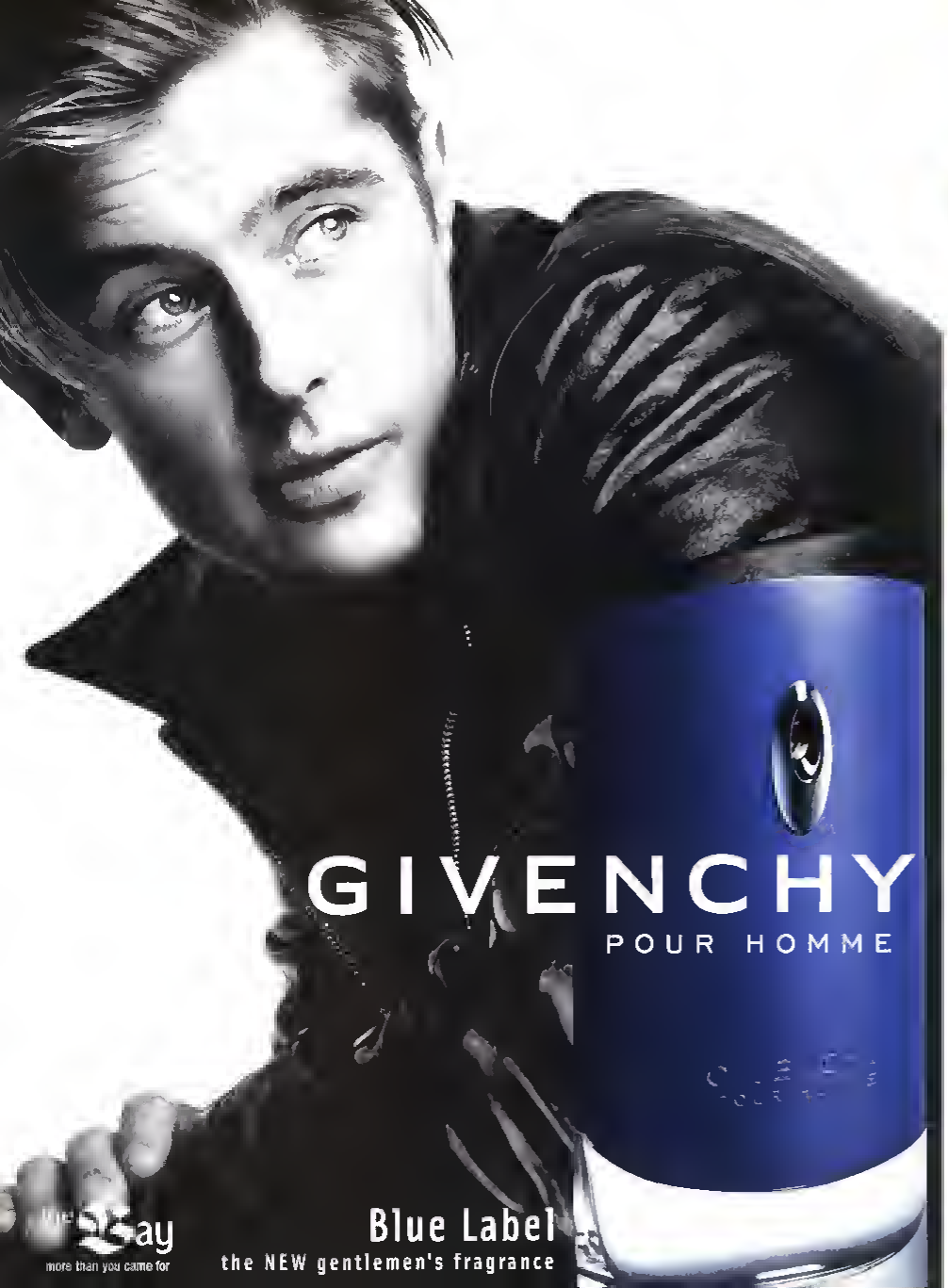
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MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



ILLUSTRATION BY SARA SPACKS

MACLEANS.CA FOR BREAKFAST

With breaking news, daily updates and up-to-the-minute headlines, *macleans.ca* is now your first-stop news source of the day.

The website's recent makeover features a revitalized home page that highlights its dynamic new content, says *Maclean's* Online Editor Derek Chezzi. "That includes Canadian and international news, politics and entertainment, plus a new health section, which delivers the latest information relating to health issues affecting you and your family. Never before has this depth of unique Web-exclusive content been available to our online audience."

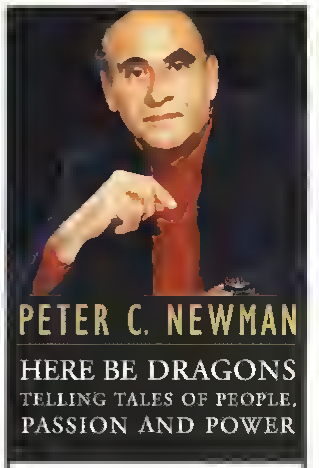
Macleans.ca has also added a new automotive section, and more new features are in the works. "Plus," Chezzi adds, "we continue to deliver all the rich, in-depth coverage you've come to expect from *macleans.ca*."

The redesign makes navigating the site more straightforward to help you find the many features you enjoy—from our daily weblogs and photo galleries to special reports and the article archive search—with greater ease.

"*Macleans.ca* delivers more than ever before," says Chezzi. "More news, more opinion and more about the country we live in. We're giving our audience—which includes magazine readers—new reasons to visit the website every day."

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HONDA

UPFRONT

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ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/AP

Iraq | In Falluja, crushing rebels 'one vertebra at a time'

Suddenly the war in Iraq took on a very different face Gone—largely, though not entirely—were the long-distance battles the U.S military has mostly fought until now death emanating from a computer console far from the actual fray Instead, U S soldiers—dusty and determined, with Iraqi special forces mopping up the rear—crab-walked house to house through the concrete hell of Falluja, dodging insurgent snipers and, on occasion, exchanging gunfire in the confines of the same building We are crushing the enemy's back, one Marine commander said, "one vertebra at a time."

For TV viewers, switching between Falluja and Remembrance Day imagery of another time, war's face seemed all of a piece But this is Iraq, where nothing is ever quite nailed down As nearly 10,000 American forces pushed deeper into the insurgent stronghold, controlling an estimated 80 per cent of Falluja by week's end, rebel attacks erupted in Baghdad and spread to other cities, notably Baiji, Ramadi and Mosul, the country's third-largest centre And in a ghastly sideshow, militants kidnapped the 75-year old cousin of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, along with the man's wife and daughter in law, vowing to behead them if the assault was not stopped Retreat is hardly likely for the U.S. and Iraqi governments, Falluja has become the symbol of their resolve to root out the rebels What remains to be seen is whether the rest of Iraq will see this resolve and fall into line—or whether Falluja will be just the first of several cities that GIs must take at gunpoint

In five days of close combat, 20 U.S. soldiers were killed and 200 wounded. The insurgent toll over 600 dead

Quote of the week | "They say, 'Well, they are taking away my licence, but at least it's by a Lamborghini.' " Chief Inspector LAURA CIANO of the Italian highway police on speeders' reaction to the force's $200,000 patrol car

ScoreCard

MAGIC BEAN
Experimental French pill helps lose weight, lower cholesterol, quit smoking, and go to heaven without dying Kidding about last one Still, while waiting for miracle, best to follow Butt Diet the one in hand goes in ash-tray, the one on couch gets exercise.

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'
Transport Minister Jean Lapierre "taken aback" by objections to proposed 18-hour workday for truckers Eighteen-wheelers plenty scary already Maybe minister needs more sleep?

BRIAN CALEN
New York City man nets US$1 million for claims right eye was blinded four different times in cruise ship mishaps. Should have seen insurance bust coming before last claim—blinded by flying disc—but hindsight, they say, is 20/20

RATRACE
Folks in Newfoundland, Quebec and B C. work fewest hours, StatsCan says Albertans the most—397 more a year than job-challenged Newfoundlanders, five more a week than B C. neighbours. Congrats, Albertans! Record will look great on tombstone.

Mansbridge on the Record



DEATH AND DECENCY

Reporting on the imminent demise of newsmakers produces dicey moments

A FEW YEARS AGO, we got a call in our newsroom less than an hour before airtime that set off a frenzy of activity. The caller said she'd just heard that a famous Canadian had suddenly passed away. When something like that happens most newsrooms react the same way—one team of journalists starts looking for material that will form an obituary while another is assigned to try to confirm what, at that point, is just a rumour. In this case, quick confirmation was crucial. The person in question was influential enough to the lives of millions of Canadians that if he were dead, it would almost certainly be the lead item.

Time was ticking away. The obit squad signalled that they would be ready if needed, but the confirmation team was having problems. The well-known Canadian lived in a small community, yet everyone contacted there was either unaware of any death, or was in our position—they had only heard rumours.

There is always a hesitancy, based on common decency, to phone family members at a time like this, but with the clock showing five minutes to air, that was the call that had to be made. As I walked toward the studio, I watched one of those newsroom scenes unfold that is best understood by those who work in this, at times, hothouse environment. The editor assigned to the call that would determine whether we went with the story was on the line with a family member asking the terribly awkward question. After a few seconds of conversation, while still expressing his sorrow, he raised first his eyes and then followed with his fist and a thumbs-up sign. I went to my anchor chair and, seconds later, started the broadcast with the sad news of the death of a Canadian icon.

> **The editor raised his fist with a thumbs-up sign. Seconds later, I started the news with the death of a Canadian icon.**

I've thought of that moment a few times lately as I watch how we in the media have dealt with the failing health of two major public figures—the president of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, and William Rehnquist, the U.S. Supreme Court chief justice. These were serious illnesses, with death a distinct, even likely, possibility in both cases. Both situations have profound effects on events, and so they both naturally provoke much discussion. Yet at the same time there is something shabby about how both cases were handled.

Since Arafat was clearly dying over the past few weeks, let me focus on the Rehnquist story as it is more problematic. Here's a guy who is fighting thyroid cancer, is out of the hospital and said to be working on court cases at home. Let's hope he doesn't watch TV, because if he did he'd be confronted with a daily barrage of discussions about the consequences of his passing. Issues like what his death could mean to the balance of the court, who the front-runners are for his position at the head of the bench, and what his accomplishments and failures have been. Unseemly, no? Then again, at least he gets to know how his life is being measured—a kind of eulogy preview.

Back to the passing of our famous Canadian. I've often thought about that moment in the newsroom and I've decided that if I ever write a book about my time in this place, I'll not only recall that story, but I may even title the book after it. *Thumbs Up, He's Dead.* It sounds tacky, but in the world of journalism, it really wasn't.

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of *The National*. To comment: letters@macleans.ca

FaceTime



Big stick

For B.C. slugger Jason Bay—26 home runs in his debut season—it was an eventful few days. The 26-year-old from Trail was selected National League Rookie of the Year, the first time the honour has gone to a Canadian (and to a Pittsburgh Pirate for that matter). Plus, it came just days after he married his long-time girlfriend. On the award front, it was a season of milestones. Houston's Roger Clemens became the oldest pitcher, at 42, to win the Cy Young, it was his seventh, also an all-time record.



Wild world, baby

A lesson in peace training? Just weeks after being barred from the U.S.—suspected of having terrorist connection—Yusuf Islam, the singer formerly known as Cat Stevens, was given the Man for Peace award in Rome by former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Islam, who renounced pop stardom in the 1970s to become a devout Muslim—after a near drowning—was being honoured for his international charity, Small Kindness. Once a writer of hummable tunes, Islam was removed from a plane bound for Washington and returned to England in September after his name showed up on a no fly list. Britain protested. But he seems to have regarded the ordeal merely as a test of how hard it is to get by just upon a smile.



Iced

In one of hockey's most bizarre sideshows, ex-St. Louis forward Mike Danton, 24, was sentenced to 7½ years for asking a man to murder agent David Frost. The go between: a 19 year-old girl who didn't know the full story; asked to be hit man, a police dispatcher who went right to his bosses. More weird—after the verdict, Danton and Frost said they are as tight as they've been since Frost took control of Danton's life when he was barely into his teens. Danton wants to be transferred to a Canadian jail, but this probably ends his NHL career; even with early parole, he likely won't be able to play in the U.S. with a criminal record.

RON WURZER/AP; CORRADO CIAMBALVO/AP; CLINTON COUNTY JAIL/AP



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WORLD

FLEEING Up to 700 Canadians became caught up in one of post-colonial Africa's biggest evacuations as relatively prosperous Ivory Coast, the world's largest exporter of cocoa, erupted in a spasm of mob violence. The rioting was sparked by France's destruction of its former colony's entire air force. The planes, used to attack rebel compounds, had bombed a French base, killing nine French peacekeepers. Vengeful mobs attacked European-owned homes and businesses, some chanting, "Everybody catch a white."

RETALIATION Despite a well-earned reputation for tolerance, the Netherlands exploded in a week of religious confrontation following the brutal street murder of filmmaker Theo van Gogh. His death on Nov. 2, blamed on Islamic fundamentalists upset with his depiction of their religion, emboldened xenophobes to attack and burn at least a dozen Muslim schools and mosques. Dutch police also engaged in a day-long battle and grenade attack with alleged Islamic militants in The Hague.

TREND LINE A lesbian couple from Dublin—who flew to B.C. to be wed a year ago—can seek to have their union formally recognized in Catholic Ireland, in what may be a test case for all of Europe, a judge ruled.

Hard-living, hard-smoking Scotland intends to be the next European country to ban smoking in pubs, restaurants and all other public places. England is still holding out.

Bavaria became the fourth German state to ban Muslim school teachers from wearing headscarves, claiming they're a symbol of repression.

PROTEST A train carrying spent nuclear fuel from France to Germany ran over and killed a French protester who had chained himself to the tracks. The young man's death cast a pall over Europe's anti-nuclear lobby, which has often clashed spectacularly with authorities over the transport and storage of waste.



TRAGEDY The fire started in the living room, though investigators are still unsure why. What they do know is that it raced through the century-old farmhouse near West Lincoln, Ont., like a whirlwind, killing 7: pregnant Monika Woerlen, 35, and her seven kids, aged 18 months to 11, as they slept. Her husband, Marc, who was raised in the house, was away at the time checking out a new farm in the Ottawa area.

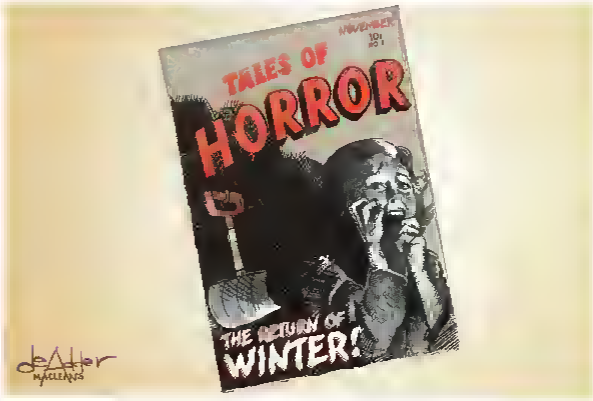
REMODELLING In what may be just the first step in shaping his second term, President George W. Bush accepted the resignations of Commerce Secretary Don Evans and Attorney General John Ashcroft, a controversial right winger who has been accused of trampling civil rights in the name of security. Ashcroft is to be replaced by White House counsel Alberto Gonzales, a Bush confidant who would become the country's first Hispanic attorney general.

AMERICANA The Bush administration is allowing commercial flight crews to carry stun guns. Crews on Korean Air jets are the first to be accredited.

Total compensation to the families and victims of the 9/11 attacks reached US$38.1 billion, with just over half of that being paid out by private insurance firms.

ONLINE Britain's National Archives is putting online the military records of five million British and Commonwealth soldiers and airmen, including Canadians, who fought in the First World War. Details can be found at *www.documentsonline.nationalarchives.gov.uk*

BY MICHAEL DE ADDER



NIAGARA REGION POLICE/CP

HEALTH

FLU Canada's public health agency is asking Ottawa to pay for an experimental flu shot to guard against the sometimes lethal strain of avian flu wending its way through southeast Asia. Such a vaccine would cost millions of dollars to develop and may never be needed. But the World Health Organization, fearing a major flu pandemic is overdue and that this current strain *might* be the trigger to set it off, is asking developed countries to ready the vaccines with which **the entire world could be inoculated.**

VITAMIN E It was once thought to be a bulwark in warding off heart disease and some cancers. But researchers at Johns Hopkins University medical school in Baltimore now say that too much vitamin E **does more harm than good.** The study found a slightly increased risk of death with regular doses of around 400 IU a day.

CANADA

TRIAL BALLOONS Promising to crack down on phony asylum seekers, Immigration Minister Judy Sgro opened the door to an **amnesty for migrant workers** who fail to qualify under the current point system but have been in Canada for long periods and have put down roots.

Saying Canada cannot afford to be the drugstore to the U.S., federal Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh said he intends to crack down on Canadian doctors countersigning U.S. prescriptions even if that brings an end to **Internet pharmacies.**

SEAT BELTS Ontario will consider **mandatory seat belts on school buses,** specifically for small children, an approach that would no doubt push other provinces to follow suit. But it is balking at requiring paid adult monitors as recommended by the provincial coroner following an inquiry into the asphyxiation of four-year-old Allyceea Ennis of Thunder Bay in February. She was found unconscious on the floor as the bus with 35 children pulled up at school.

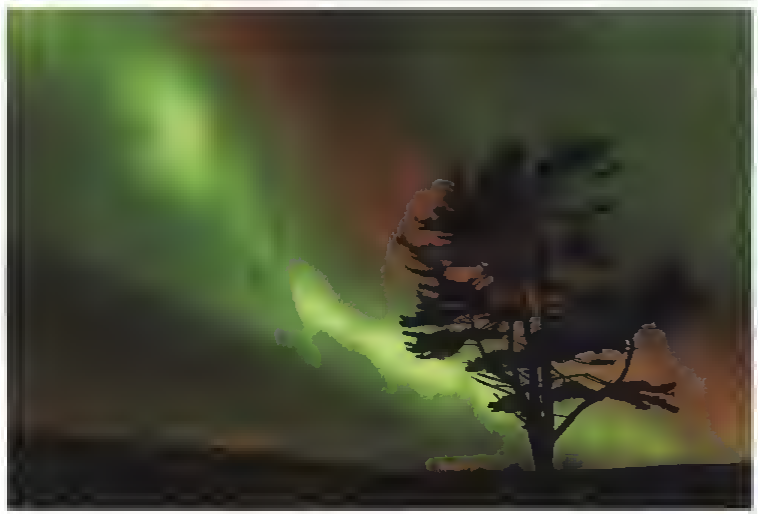


SHELTERS Toronto health officials are **testing 4,000 homeless people for tuberculosis** after six staff at a downtown shelter tested positive for the disease. Meanwhile, about 140 people became sick at a Calgary drop-in centre after the Norovirus stomach bug swept through the facility for the homeless.

EXPLOSION About 500 people were forced from their homes and Canada's busiest highway, the 401, was closed for hours after a propane factory in Port Darlington, Ont., caught fire and sent tanks **soaring through the night sky like rockets.** Miraculously, no one was injured. The incident occurred just a few kilometres from a nuclear facility.

FIRED After two weeks' deliberation, Saskatoon Police Chief Russell Sabo braved a mutiny in the ranks and fired Constables Bradley Senger and Lawrence Hartwig, implicated in the freezing death of **native teen Neil Stonechild** 14 years ago. A judicial inquiry found the two officers had Stonechild in custody the night he died, and also criticized the force for its investigation of the incident. The two officers denied involvement and the police union had threatened job action if they were disciplined.

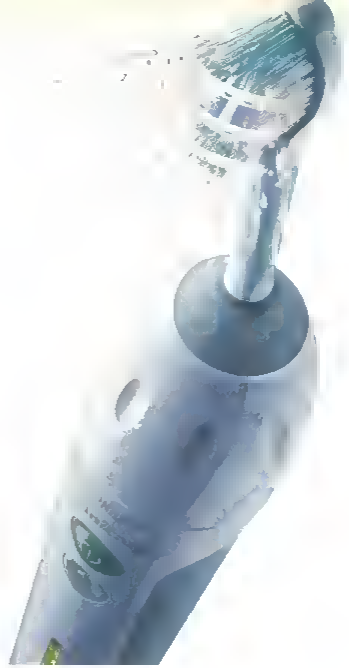
NEW RECRUITS The RCMP is so short of beat cops it has begun a pilot project in B.C. to lure 400 former officers out of retirement. The program is aimed primarily at recent retirees. Only those who are under 60 and **can still pass a physical** need apply.



DISCO NIGHTS

A staple of Arctic—and often Western Canadian—viewings, the northern lights took a sharp southern turn last week as an unusually strong burst of solar flares made the night sky shimmer like a gypsy dancer. The photo is from a field near Kitchener, Ont. There were sightings even in urban Toronto—and as far south as Oklahoma.

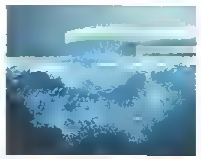
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Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



OTTAWA'S HELPING HAND

The feds have finally realized that immigrants need a boost finding work

WHEN DAVID PECAUT first met the articulate and polished Tim Simba, he was taken aback. The Zimbabwean-born marketing executive had been in Toronto for more than a year. Why did he not have a job that matched his extensive marketing skills and education? Why was he working in a call centre while tirelessly sending out largely ignored resumés? As a volunteer employment mentor, Pecaut was intrigued. Together, they tinkered this fall with Simba's application, adopting the format of Canadian resumés. They figured out what sort of jobs he should be applying for—and how he could impress interviewers with his knowledge of their company. Simba learned to believe in himself again.

Business consultant Pecaut, in turn, grasped what immigration specialists, including senior federal officials, are now belatedly acknowledging: we cannot just plop today's highly skilled wave of immigrants into the job market, assuming they can cope. Many now come from nations where the cultural and language differences are profound. Immigrants may have passed Ottawa's basic language test, but they may not know the English or French translation for technical words in their field. Many businesses, in turn, have outsourced recruitment to firms that rarely take the time to understand what an immigrant's educational and work experience really mean in equivalent Canadian terms. And few immigrants have personal networks that can alert them to openings. "We are learning it is all about employers," says Pecaut. "And you have to address those employer issues at the local level."

> **We cannot plop highly skilled newcomers with profound cultural differences into the job market, assuming they can cope**

That realization came home to roost this month when the Ottawa-based Public Policy Forum published a poll of more than 2,000 employers. The good news is that most respondents laud immigrants for everything from their capacity to generate new ideas to their commitment to the firm. The bad news is that when they have labour market needs, only 20 per cent are "very likely" to hire recent immigrants with foreign training. "Human resources people are overwhelmed by applications, so it is easiest to take the path of least resistance, hiring people with Canadian credentials," says the forum's special projects director, Yves Poisson. "Immigrants come here with expectations—and we have let them down."

The lesson is not lost on Ottawa. The last budget pointedly devoted $20 million per year for immigrant employment pilot projects. That will almost certainly include copycat versions of Toronto's Career Bridge, which sponsors the placement of skilled interns in local businesses (and which Pecaut helped to found). It means more mentorship projects. It means federal assistance in translating an immigrant's educational and employment experience into its Canadian equivalent—probably before the immigrant gets on the plane.

This means a 21st-century shift in our programs to help newcomers find work. Ottawa may put more effort into processing immigrants who can fill specific jobs. And it may tinker with its controversial points system to accept more skilled tradesmen who often don't meet tough federal educational requirements. The bottom line is that today's immigrants need more help—and Ottawa must provide it. Simba may not yet have his dream job. But he now has a chance. M

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer. mary.janigan@macleans.rogers.com

Passages



WON She is a writer's writer, a crafter of sure-footed stories that have helped put Can-Lit on the world map. At 73, small town Ontario's **Alice Munro** now also has her second Giller Prize, the $25,000 award bestowed for her 12th book, a collection of short stories called *Runaway*.

SENTENCED **Lyse Lemieux**, the former chief justice of the Quebec Superior Court, was fined the minimum $600 and had her licence suspended for a year after pleading guilty to impaired driving. A respected jurist, Lemieux, 68, resigned in August following her arrest and was given an annual pension of $160,266 by the federal cabinet.

INJURED Atlanta Thrashers sniper **Dany Heatley**, 23, was hit in the eye by a puck while playing for a Swiss team during the NHL lockout and was in a Berne hospital awaiting surgery. Heatley, charged with vehicular homicide over the high-speed crash that killed teammate **Dan Snyder** a year ago, is expected in a Georgia court in January. His lawyers are trying to negotiate a plea bargain.



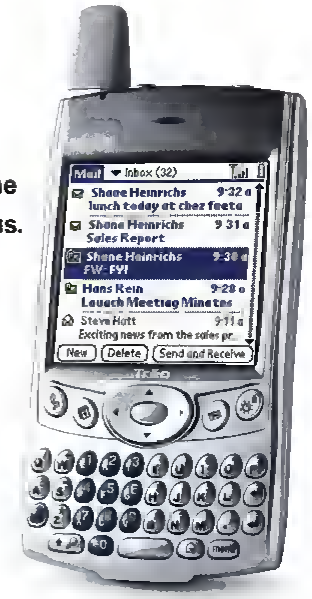
QUIT In 2003, **Tom Higgins** was CFL coach of the year and his Edmonton Eskimos were hosting the Grey Cup. Now the 49-year-old is out of work—he quit after the Esks lost to Regina in the semifinals.

AWARDED Two Ph.D. students from B.C., **Emily Gonzales**, 32, and **Douglas Clark**, 37, won bursaries of $100,000 each to conduct environmental studies in B.C. (Gonzales) and Alberta, Yukon and Nunavut (Clark). From Canon, the camera and copier firm, the awards are among the largest of their kind.

RETIRING Northern Ontario-based cartoonist **Lynn Johnston**, 57, whose *For Better or Worse* is a newspaper staple, told fans she will be packing in the strip in three years.

FRANK GUNN/CP; DARRYL DYCK/EDMONTON SUN/CP

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Media | AL FRANKEN, RADIO HOST AND COMIC

FASCISTS—'NOT IN THE PEJORATIVE SENSE'

AL FRANKEN failed to rid Washington of George W. Bush, but the Democrats' loudest and most acerbic backer is not turning down the volume. The flagship voice of the left-leaning talk radio network Air America (*www.airamericaradio.com*), Franken recently released a CD of political comedy skits, *The O'Franken Factor Factor*—playing off the name of his archrival Bill O'Reilly's show on Fox News. Franken, a former *Saturday Night Live* writer and actor, is also considering a 2008 Senate run in Minnesota. Still reeling from the Nov. 2 results, he talks about the state of his nation

What do you want to say to the 59 million Americans who voted for Bush?
Get your information from sources other than just Fox and talk radio. And think more critically. A lot of Bush supporters believe things that are demonstrably not true. Many still think there is a connection between Iraq and terrorism, and that we found WMDs

What do four more years of a Bush White House mean to the show? For political satire, doesn't that help?
People have said Bush's win is the best thing for the show, which is probably true. Still, when Bush was first elected, everyone talked about how much they'd miss Clinton because they couldn't do blow-job jokes anymore

You recently said a Kerry loss would result in "something looking very closely like fascism."
I don't mean fascist in the pejorative sense, like Nazi storm troopers. I mean a corporate state. We're seeing that with tax breaks for corporations, no-bid contracts in Iraq, environmental regulation totally unravelling, and there are civil liberty problems. So I guess it's not far from the pejorative.

Do you watch Fox News?
I've taught myself to do it. My son, who is a college sophomore, was an intern on the show last summer and his job was to watch Fox. Some days he'd be frothing. It's enjoyable seeing a he I can use. It also helps to understand how they think.

What do you make of Bill O'Reilly's sexual-harassment scandal?
He keeps referring to himself as believing in traditional values and that we believe in secular values. I didn't know phone sex has been part of traditional values. I know marriage goes back 5,000 years, but phone sex can't go back farther than Alexander Graham Bell.

What do you think of *The Daily Show*?
Jon Stewart does a good job in his role, which is to host a comedy show. But he's also very influential. Satire can change people's minds. Satirists are envied by people in the press because you get to say things they can't say, which are much more truthful than the things they *can* say.

If satire is so influential, why consider running for Senate? I read that even Hillary Clinton said you could probably make a bigger difference on the radio.
That's all part of the calculus. I don't know yet if I'll run, since we've only been doing the show for 7½ months. It'll come down to deciding if it's more important for me to stay here or go to the Senate—which sounds very presumptuous.

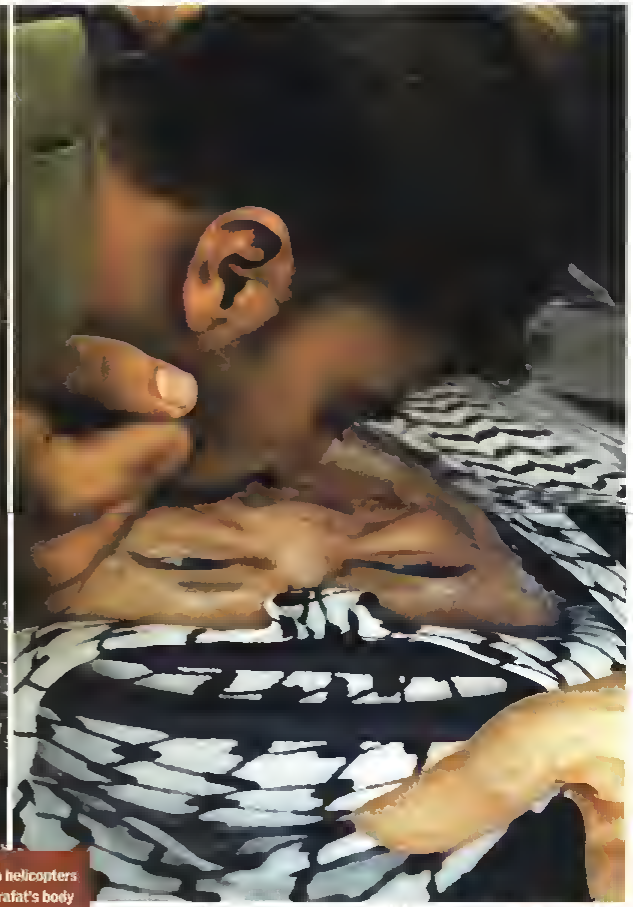
What do you say to the Democrats who joke about escaping north to Canada?
Canada's great, but I don't want us to lose those people.

So you wouldn't lead that charge?
No. I'd rather have Canadians move south.

JOHN INTINI

RICHARD PHIBBS/CORBIS OUTLINE/MAGMA





Egyptian helicopters return Arafat's body to Ramallah; mourning in Gaza

LAID TO REST

Palestinians grieve for Arafat, and begin to reorganize

IN THE END, the "old man" was buried in a stone and marble tomb, 16 km short of his promised land. His dream of a Palestinian state unfulfilled, his legacy in tatters, the mortal remains of Yasser Arafat returned to the West Bank last week, not Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque as he had so fervently wished. It was a slight the thousands of mourners who filled the compound of his ruined Ramallah headquarters—his penultimate resting place, according to the Palestinian Authority—vowed to correct. "With our blood and our soul," they chanted, "we will redeem you Yasser Arafat."

In a chaotic scene that scuttled plans for a formal burial ceremony, crowds of ordinary Palestinians broke through fences and scaled walls to say goodbye to the 75 year-old head of the PA, the only leader they've ever known. As the Egyptian military helicopter ferrying his body from Cairo—site of the official funeral, and stopover en route from his deathbed at a Paris hospital—landed, they chanted "Welcome home, old man!" Hundreds surged forward to touch his coffin, and grasping hands pulled away the Palestinian flag that draped its lid. Members of his bodyguard and the suicide-bombing al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades threw aside the bereaved and fired in the air from atop the jeep that carved a path to his tomb. Amid the photos and flags held aloft by the crowd, one Canadian Maple Leaf flapped in the dusty breeze.

The transfer of Arafat's many titles has already begun. Mahmoud Abbas, a former prime minister and close lieutenant, succeeds him as chairman of the PLO. Rauhi Fattouh, speaker of the Palestinian parliament, has been named caretaker president until a general election can be held, probably early in the New Year. But the void left behind by the secretive and autocratic Arafat remains immense. He lived spartanly, but his personal fortune—much of it siphoned away from international donors—is estimated to be in the billions (no one knows exactly how much or where it is). His own finances are so tangled with the nation's that government paycheques reportedly stopped flowing as soon as he fell ill.

George W. Bush and Tony Blair jointly pledged to jump-start the Middle East peace process, the U.S. president calling the handover of power a "great chance" to establish a Palestinian state. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, an implacable enemy of Arafat's, termed it a "historic turning point." Abbas, who is regarded as a moderate, now seems well positioned to take over the presidency. But it's unclear if he will able to command enough power to end the intifada and return to the bargaining table.

For most Palestinians, Arafat's death is an incalculable loss, not a golden opportunity. The hottest rumour on the streets of Ramallah, and the rest of the Arab world, is that Arafat didn't die the shabby death of the sick and elderly, but was poisoned by Israeli agents. One more martyr on a lengthening list. M

DAVID GUTTENFELDER/AP; ALI ALI/EPA

BIG GAME HUNTING

The Gomery inquiry is determined to follow the money trail wherever it leads

CHUCK GUITÉ CUT quite a figure when he first swaggered into the national spotlight. The retired bureaucrat, who was once conductor on the federal sponsorship gravy train, remained defiant last spring under grilling from a parliamentary committee. Guité stuck to his story that Liberal politicians and their operatives didn't interfere with the way he made the program's big-money decisions. His considerable chutzpah drove opposition MPs to distraction. He seemed like the kind of guy who would wear a cowboy hat, and he did. But that was then. Justice John Gomery's judicial inquiry is now. Under many hours of questioning from the inquiry's lawyers this month, Guité shrank to the point where it seemed he might crawl under that hat to hide. He now admits that political higher-ups often told him what to do. The notion that the buck ever stopped at his desk is no longer a viable working hypothesis.

Puncturing a puffed-up former public servant's attitude, though, is hardly a worthy accomplishment for a $20.4-million commission of inquiry. Guité's testimony is key not for what it reveals about his limited role, but for what it signals about where Gomery might go from here. Clearly, the judge's team is hunting bigger game. The stakes have been set high for key players from Jean Chrétien's era in power. Guité's revised version of how things worked during the program's late-1990s heyday features Jean Pelletier, who was Chrétien's chief of staff, and Jean Carle, once a trusted top aide to the former prime minister, personally selecting events to be sponsored. More generally, the hearings have made the suspicious way the program distributed funds a matter of record. Last week, for instance, Guité admitted that he once cut a dubious deal to reimburse Via Rail Canada Inc. for money it put up to sponsor a documentary about hockey hero Maurice (Rocket) Richard.

Such tales of federal funds diverted down strange tributaries might do little more than prompt taxpayers to give their heads a shake and look away in disgust. But beyond the facts the inquiry is bringing to light, the commission's progress toward larger goals is worth charting. It all started last winter, when Auditor General Sheila Fraser reported that Ottawa often got little or nothing for over $100 million paid in fees and commissions to Liberal-friendly advertising and communications firms, under a $250-million sponsorship program that ran between 1997 and 2003. Prime Minister Paul Martin appointed Gomery, a Montreal judge, to get to the bottom of what happened. Gomery fused a squad of lawyers and a platoon of investigators and went to work. When it is done with Guité, the commission will climb the power ladder, questioning Crown corporation officials, then politicians and their aides, and finally advertising company executives. Hearings should wrap up next spring, with a report due by the end of 2005.



Retired bureaucrat Guité no longer claims that only *he* decided which events to sponsor

Martin is expected to testify in January. An inquiry official said he has been subpoenaed, just like all the other witnesses. So far, no link has been drawn between Martin and sponsorship decision-making. More problematic for him could be questions about how much, as a Quebec cabinet minister, he knew about how a multi-million-dollar program was being run on his home turf. He has said he knew little before the whole affair became public knowledge. Even if he stays unsullied personally, Martin will have to cope with any further damage to his party's already badly dented reputation in Quebec. Opposition MPs are on the lookout for evidence that the program was designed to line the pockets of Liberal friends, or to direct money back to the party. "Was it the intent of the political side to use this program for dubious purposes?" asks Conservative MP James Moore. "Or did it just go off the rails? It's either corruption or incompetence—and an answer about which is required."

That answer might not arise from the hearings. An inquiry official said as many as 38 experts, including forensic accountants from the firm Kroll Lindquist Avey, are working for Gomery "seven days a week," combing millions of pages of government and company documents to piece together a money trail. More testimony from Guité is slated to come later this month, but the real investigative action—sifting through that mountain of documents and discs—is taking place off-stage.

TOM HANSON/CP

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MOMENTUM LOST

Ottawa's dithering threatens to kill research projects all across the country, PAUL WELLS writes

"I'M A LITTLE AFRAID," Robert Lacroix, the rector of the Université de Montréal, said in an interview. "We don't seem to be on the radar screen any more."

Lacroix was in Ottawa on Nov. 4 to give a speech about the astonishing investment the federal government has made in university research since 1997—and to warn he's afraid the momentum is fading. Paul Martin's new government "has not yet clearly stated its position on university research funding and its innovation strategy for the next few years," Lacroix told a breakfast crowd. "The last Speech from the Throne was vague on the question."

And Martin's new emphasis on commercialization of research, rushing ideas out of the lab and into the marketplace, unnerves Lacroix because he thinks it could threaten labs that have barely been opened and whose long-term research projects aren't yet ready for the market.

Little of this will sound particularly novel—"stakeholder complains about funding" is hardly a novel storyline in Ottawa—unless you know a bit about the recent history of federal funding for the knowledge economy. It's grown at astonishing speed. It has left administrators at Canada's big research universities almost giddy with joy. It has had concrete and demonstrable benefit for Canada's economy.

And now a few people wonder whether the bundle of policies that are together called "the innovation agenda" are getting lost amid all the Martin government's myriad other priorities. "I think there's uncertainty," another of the country's top university presidents said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "And uncertainty, in this environment, is trouble. No news is not good news."



Lacroix says the Liberals have yet to clearly state their position on research funding

> **'I THINK** there's uncertainty,' said one university president. 'And uncertainty, in this environment, is trouble.'

And good news is what Canada's researchers had been growing used to. Beginning with the establishment of the Canada Foundation for Innovation in 1997, the federal government has spent billions of dollars in physical infrastructure, grants for research, a Canada Research Chairs program that pays the salaries of hundreds of university researchers across the country, and assorted other costs of research.

Canada's journalists have let most of this activity go sailing over their heads. The Liberals' innovation agenda is rarely a topic of debate in Parliament. But the academic community is sitting up and taking notice. The latest issue of the journal *The Scientist*

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINNE MUSCHI

put five Canadian universities in its Top 10 Best Places to Work in Academia (outside the United States, which *The Scientist* considers as a separate category), Canada's best performance ever. The University of Toronto and the University of Alberta ranked first and second, ahead of the University of Dundee in Scotland.

But research is a long-term investment and other countries are at least as obsessed with improving their research and innovation performance as Canada is, Lacroix says. China passed Canada last year, and Italy this year, in the production of scientific research papers. In 2001, the Chrétien government set a goal of moving from 15th to fifth place among OECD member nations in terms of research spending by 2010. Lacroix said so far Canada has risen to 11th.



The finance minister says he's still looking 'for ways to enhance the innovation agenda'

And what became of Canada's innovation agenda? It's had to wait, like so much else in Ottawa, for the Liberals to fight an election and then get over their shock at nearly losing. "From December to June, not a single piece of paper seems to have moved anywhere at Industry Canada," one government insider said.

The federal government's own website dedicated to innovation has been only sporadically updated since Allan Rock and Jane Stewart, former ministers in Jean Chrétien's government, produced an "innovation strategy" in 2002. Sources say that strategy—the fruit of two years of consultation with experts in universities and the private sector—was not part of the mountain of paper that landed on David Emerson's desk when he became the new industry minister after the federal election in June.

Confusion, as observers of this government are learning, is not the same as a lack of commitment. As finance minister during the Chrétien years, Martin was a key advocate for the investment in university research, along with then industry minister John Manley and Eddie Goldenberg, Chrétien's main policy adviser. "From all I've seen, the commitment remains intact," said Peter MacKinnon, president of the University of Saskatchewan and chairman of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

Ralph Goodale, Martin's finance minister, could hardly be more categorical. "I will be absolutely looking, as every one of my predecessors has done since 1993, for ways to enhance the innovation agenda, budget after budget after budget," he said. "It is so patently the right thing to do. I wouldn't want to see that momentum turned back."

> **'IT took three years to set up these facilities, and just when they're reaching their maximum productivity, it all ends**

Neither would John Bergeron. But for Bergeron the matter is more urgent.

Bergeron is director of the Montreal Proteomics Network and chair of the department of anatomy and cell biology at McGill University. He's also the elected president of the Human Proteome Organization, a worldwide association of researchers devoted to studying the crucial role of proteins in regulating the body's activities. And in a few weeks, he expects to send layoff notices to about 50 immensely skilled researchers because he can't get his federal funding renewed. "It's kind of embarrassing," Bergeron said.

Bergeron and his colleagues won about $43 million in 2001 from a bewildering array of federal agencies to identify every protein in mammal cells and catalogue their interactions. He assembled a world-class team of researchers and began producing an impressive volume of research. Then in August he was informed that there was simply no mechanism for renewing its grant, which will run out next March.

"It took the last three years to set up these facilities and just when they're reaching their maximum productivity, it all ends," said Bergeron's colleague Sean Taylor. Taylor's increasingly frantic calls to Ottawa for bridge funding, so Bergeron's team can stay together while the government figures out what to do next, have not produced any answers.

So it's a strange situation Canada's researchers find themselves in. One of the architects of the innovation agenda, Paul Martin, is running the government. His finance minister has his marching orders to keep the momentum going. But researchers are on tenterhooks wondering whether they will be able to keep projects going that have barely begun to reach their potential. "We cannot live in an unstable, insecure environment," Heather Munroe-Blum, the principal of McGill University, said. "We will simply lose people."

TOM HANSON/CP



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SOVIET *CHIC*?

The old guard recalls the real communist era to ALEXANDRE TRUDEAU

Maclean's Contributing Editor ***Alexandre Trudeau*** *went to Moscow to see how the Russian capital is faring 13 years after the fall of the Soviet Union. In the first of a series (Nov. 15), he reported on the New Russians and how they flaunt their riches. This week, Trudeau visits some old family friends from the communist era*



Pierre Trudeau, here welcoming Yakovlev to Ottawa, became friends with the ambassador

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, there is tremendous wealth in Russia. It is a massive country full of resources. The record price of crude oil, of which Russia produces millions of barrels, is generating enormous and unexpected income. These are boom days. For the lucky few who have some claim to the pie, the New Russians, wealth means unfettered freedom where all the worldly comforts imaginable can be purchased. This bold new age is in sharp contrast with everything communism stood for. In the Soviet era, the great wealth was siphoned off into an elaborate planned economy where everyone was entitled to work, accommodation, food and leisure. Of course, in the final decades, the riches were increasingly used to feed a military juggernaut and the corrupt bureaucracy that managed the whole thing.

The Brezhnev period from the mid-'60s to the early '80s was a time of staunch communist conservatism—and of increasing corruption among the ruling elite of the Communist party. For some, it was also a time of deep disillusionment. Even at the highest levels of the party, among those who had played key parts in the great sacrifices and triumphs of the Second World War and in the military-industrial miracles of the post-war period, a few brave realists began to emerge. They began to whisper that the emperor had no clothes, that the end was inevitable.

Alexander Nikolaevich Yakovlev was such a man. From the humblest of peasant beginnings, Yakovlev had been a war hero and had risen through the ranks of the party. In the early '70s, he began decrying the rot that had infected communism in Russia: violence, depravity, chauvinism, racism. For this, he was removed from the circles of power—and sent to be the Soviet ambassador to Canada.

Yakovlev well remembers his years in Canada, 1973 until 1983, as an exile. "I was sad to be sent away from Russia at such a crucial time," he tells me. "What made my stay in Canada enjoyable was the friendship I developed with your father." Indeed, more than my journalistic interest in Yakovlev, I am motivated to see the man whose name and nickname I bear. By the time I was born in December 1973, my father had been prime minister for 5½ years. My parents were sufficiently close to Alexander Nikolaevich for my mother to phone him to ask if "Sacha" was, in fact, the proper diminutive of Alexandre and an appropriate nickname for her newborn baby.

I AM undeniably discouraged by the spectacle of obscene wealth and abject poverty that I have witnessed

The '70s and early '80s were interesting times for Soviet-Western relations. The Cold War's nuclear arms race, spy games and defections created a fascinating backdrop to my father and Yakovlev's friendship. "In the machinations between our respective camps, there was always the assurance that we were just men, and as men, friends," he recalls during my visit to his Moscow office.

PETER BREGG/CP



Communism's symbols still mean something at the Hammer and Sickle Cultural Centre

Yakovlev, now 80, tells me of the games he had to play with my father on occasion, such as in 1983 when Canada expelled a dozen suspected spies from among the embassy staff in Ottawa. "Since I knew that at least some of the individuals accused were *not* spies—and in any case it was my duty—I went to Pierre to protest," Yakovlev says. "Pierre just told me to point out which people on the list were not, in fact, spies. Of course, I was forced to argue that they were all innocent. He then asked me if I wanted to hear the tapes which proved that some of them were spying. I told him that I would have to ask the Kremlin if they wanted me to hear such evidence. The Kremlin prohibited me from hearing the tapes and the expulsions went forward in their entirety."

After his stint in Canada, Yakovlev went on to become one of Mikhail Gorbachev's top lieutenants. He is often referred to as the architect of "glasnost"—the "openness" that eventually led to the dismantling of the Soviet empire. That makes him a key person to ask about the state of things in Russia some 13 years later.

I am undeniably discouraged by the spectacle of obscene wealth and abject poverty that I have witnessed in Moscow. I ask him whether there might not still be a place in Russia for some of the better aspects of communism—some mechanism for the distribution of wealth, for the welfare of the unfortunate. I also suggest that the hardening of President Vladimir Putin's hold on power, though gnawing away at some political freedoms, might nonetheless improve the overall health of the nation and help the distribution of resources among the very poor.

Yakovlev disagrees. "From beginning to end, our communism was a violent one, founded on fear and bathed in blood. Russia will never so much as glance down that road again." But when I argue that Russia's experiment in democracy and capitalism has created an irresponsible society of haves and have-nots, he explains that it's the result of Russians' particular concept of freedom. "Here, one person's freedom is still seen as limited by another person's freedom," Yakovlev says. "Thus the freer I am, the more I can exert my will over you and everyone else unhindered. This is not a very peaceful or civilized notion of freedom. We still have to learn that real freedom is secured in common responsibility and trust."

I ask if something couldn't be done to help stabilize the society enough for it to find a proper footing for freedom. Yakovlev refutes this idea, too. "The way of real freedom

PHOTOGRAPH BY HEID HOLLINGER

has to be learned slowly by a whole society," he explains. "It cannot be willed into being by one part of society. The gentle freedom cannot be built by restricting the harsh kind. The very bureaucrats that run government, and Putin himself, have to partake in the learning of freedom you can trust. Look at how long and hard it was to create responsible and democratic societies in the West. Here too it will take time. Time."

"But it could take a hundred years," I say.

"Yes it could," he says.

"But in the meantime, it is so hard for those who are not lucky," I add.

"Yes," he says. "So it is."

I leave Sacha Yakovlev, reminded how it takes great intellectual courage to be a realist. And patience. In old Yakovlev's case, it means that he will probably never see the results of the forces he helped put in motion. Glasnost, openness, is still only in its infancy.



The man who ended the communist era enjoys a little *glasnost* with writer Trudeau

THE SUBWAY IN MOSCOW was a feat of communist industry. As such, it is aptly decorated with revolutionary imagery: heroic workers toiling by the blast furnaces, ghistening bodies bent over in the fields and, above all, the golden star of Leninism. Beneath these symbols, the masses now pass indifferently. For the young especially, the Soviet times and communist ideology are receding so far in the past they seem quaint, curious, alien: a distant civilization whose structures remain, but without giving any clues as to what they meant or represented. "Soviet chic" is even a fad among trendy youth: they wear the hammer and sickle on their clothing, the Soviet star in their hair or through their pierced navels.

For a few, though, communism and its symbols still have meaning. There are even a few statues of Lenin still scattered here and there around Moscow. At one, near the entrance to a subway station in a Moscow suburb, I meet up with Victor Ivanovic Anpilov, leader of the National Bolshevik party: *Trudovaya Russia*. It is Ivanovic's birthday and the day of the party's annual congress. The inner circle are to meet at the statue and then go to a rally. A toothless pensioner marks the spot of the rendezvous, steadfastly brandishing a tattered old Soviet flag on a long pole which he dramatically swings through the air. Young passersby glance at him with mild astonishment and contempt. Victor Ivanovic himself arrives on the scene driving a grey and rusted Lada, packed with party members. In a solemn suit and tie, he greets Lenin ceremoniously, as if he were an old friend. Anpilov is short and stocky and has a haughty and decisive way about him.

IT'S ironic that those who have profited most from Gorbachev's legacy can claim, 'That bastard, he ruined our country!'

The rally is to take place nearby, at the Hammer and Sickle Cultural Centre. The place is in a pathetic state: broken windows, damaged floors and soiled furniture. Stalin's portrait hangs prominently in the entrance hall. The Bolshevik party's numbers are dying off. Literally. It is a sad sight. The 100 or so gathered here mainly seem to be mangy pensioners. Victor Ivanovic stands triumphantly on the dusty stage beneath a huge red banner. "Russia belongs to the workers!" he proclaims.

The proceedings have all the formalities of the communism of old. "Let me first welcome the delegation from Dagestan!" he bellows. A middle-aged man with a big moustache and a huge grin stands up. He is the delegation from the faraway Republic of Dagestan, in the North Caucasus mountains in the southernmost part of Russia. Motions are made. Red cards are raised in support. The rally goes on for hours.

The whole thing strikes me as pathetic beyond words. The Russian Workers party is a party of wretched castaways from the New Russia surviving on pennies in small apartments: the old, the forgotten, the hopeless.

But photographer Heidi Hollinger and I meet up with Victor Anpilov in a more intimate setting later that evening. It would seem the delegation from Dagestan is a good chap. He is hosting the party at a small club that he has built amid abandoned factories in the middle of some industrial wasteland on the fringes of Moscow. Shish kebabs and vodka are not in short supply.

Over dinner, I learn that in the '70s and '80s Victor Ivanovic was a correspondent for ITAR-TASS, the Soviet news agency, in Latin America. While communism was failing in Mother Russia, in places like Nicaragua he was in the hills with ragged dreamers, all ready to die for the ideal of universal health, education and justice for all.

Several vodka shots later, we are all wholeheartedly singing Latin American revolutionary songs. Most of all we sing to the fallen hero, Che Guevara. Then Anpilov is standing, his face red, head quivering, fists swinging and pounding the air for effect. With crooked teeth and raspy baritone, he sings the last verse one more time, alone. "El Commandante, Che Guevara!"

During my visit to Russia this fall, the horrible massacre at Beslan weighs heavily on everyone. Nothing quite so gruesome has happened to Russia since the breakup of the Soviet Union. When I ask Anpilov about it, he says with his usual sense of formality, "Beslan proves what I have been arguing for years: the free-market economy is forcing us to behave like animals to each other."

ON MY INTELLECTUAL adventures in the land of the old guard, one last encounter is necessary. No one is more identified with the end of the communist era than Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. There is something ironic about the way Russians feel toward him. I have heard even New Russians—those who have profited most from Gorbachev's legacy—exclaim, "That bastard, he ruined our country!"

It seems fitting that I only manage to catch him at the VIP departure lounge at of the Moscow airport as he is leaving Russia, where he's hated, for a visit to the United States, where he's seen as a hero. Mikhail Sergeyevich is impatient, but soon waxes poetic about Canada. "They say that Thatcher was the first in the West to discover me, but Canada knew me before," he says. Knowing my time is limited, I get straight to the point: "Is there a future for socialism in Russia?" He looks at me as if I am out of my head. Then I quickly remember that socialism is what the Soviets called Marxism, even Stalinism, and add, "I mean socialism as we understand it in Canada or Sweden."

"Maybe," he answers, "but not soon."

When I say life seems so difficult for Russia's poor, Gorbachev agrees, noting that over 80 per cent of the people "have an extremely meagre existence here."

"Why are the Russians so hard?" I wonder.

"No!" he says imploringly, "we are not hard. We are a very warm and gentle people. But we are still finding our way."

PHOTOGRAPH BY HEIDI HOLLINGER

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Preschool tutoring, music lessons, sports: enough is enough, say some parents. Let kids be kids again.

A RADICAL MOVEMENT is afoot in Canadian neighbourhoods. Its adherents seem just like ordinary moms and dads, but they're standing modern parenting culture on its head. Call them the new refuseniks. They refuse to drill their kids with flash cards, or to play Mozart sonatas before, during and after childbirth. They put family dinners before hockey practice, urge kids to jump in autumn leaves rather than practise piano, toss early learning workbooks in the trash, and walk by lamppost signs for tutoring without a second glance.

Most heretical of all, they're letting their kids get bored from time to time.

It's all part of a backlash against what American psychiatrist Alvin Rosenfeld calls "hyper-parenting." Called into action by evidence of mounting stress levels among kids, the refuseniks are dedicated to bringing child's play back to childhood. They cite experts who say unstructured time is critical to a child's intellectual development. The wellspring of creativity and imagination, open-ended play also teaches kids how to co-operate and solve problems while providing an outlet for everyday stresses. A few luminaries, such as Olympic medallist Silken Laumann, with Silken's Active Kids promoting physical activity and play, are lending the movement support. Meanwhile, folks at the Denmark-based International Play Association have even devised an official declaration, the gist of which has woven its way into a couple of clauses in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. And in the spring, Salt Lake City advertising executive and mother Muffy Mead-Ferro came out with the movement's manifesto, the bestseller *Confessions of a Slacker Mom*. Taking on everything from educational toys and early reading to scrapbooking (creating albums of your kids' lives) and anti-bacterial soap, Mead-Ferro advocates parenting by instinct. "I feel fine," she writes, "about placing the onus on my kids to figure out something interesting to do."

Shapiro, with son Harry, resolved to do 'fun-stuff' with her young children

Yet, as every revolutionary vanguard discovers early on, the obstacles to realizing its goals can overwhelm the best intentions. Which raises the question: are we really capable of hands-off parenting?

PIANO LESSONS, joining the basketball and gymnastics teams, and babysitting the neighbours' kids—all great opportunities to live and learn. But those activities, combined with maintaining a straight-A average,

PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD KOROL

started to overwhelm 12-year-old "Amy" from Winnipeg. She had trouble falling asleep and then would wake up in the middle of the night and ruminate about how she was going to fit everything in. During the day, she suffered nausea and butterflies in her stomach. Those are textbook signs of stress, says Steven Feldgater, the psychologist at the anxiety disorders clinic of St. Boniface General Hospital who treated her, but Amy was initially reluctant to acknowledge it. Many kids "feel the need to present a strong face to parents," he says. "They think if they can't manage, it's a sign of weakness, of not measuring up." And even if parents aren't directly pressuring a child, he adds, "it's a very competitive world."

"James" was still in primary school when he first saw a school psychologist for anxiety. By the time he was 13, his symptoms included headaches, stomach aches and sleepless nights. The normally quiet Winnipeg teen maintained better-than-average grades, but had difficulty focusing in class. He also withdrew socially to the point where just walking down the corridor gave him the shakes. "He worried about everything," says Michelle Diawol, the school psychologist who's been counselling him for three years. "His grades, friends, whether he'd get sick." We tend to notice symptoms of anxiety in adolescence when academic and social demands increase, she says, but the problem often "starts long before that." And parents, especially if they're professionals who expect their child will be as successful as they are, can play a role. James, says Diawol, "was always trying to reassure his folks by saying, 'I'm going to do fine. Don't worry' "—a telltale sign that he was feeling their pressure, imagined or real.



Mara Malone was placed in a Toronto Kumon Centre to get 'a head start'

PSYCHIATRIST ROSENFELD knows all too well how tempting it is for contemporary parents to turn their children into ambitious projects. The co-author of *The Over-Scheduled Child. Avoiding the Hyper-Parenting Trap*, he tries to reassure the millions of North Americans who catch him on TV talk shows that parental pressure isn't necessarily the gateway to genius. He throws out some little known facts to put it all in perspective. Leonard Bernstein didn't start playing piano until he was 10, George Gershwin's musical brilliance developed on the heels of a childhood spent roaming the streets, and Albert Einstein was a late talker and poor student.

Still, it's difficult for adults to relax in the face of science. Some 25 years of research tells us not only that the key moments of brain development occur during the first six years of a child's life, but we've also underestimated the learning potential of infants and toddlers. These revelations have led to a flurry of worthy initiatives in daycares and community centres across Canada, many designed to catch kids who don't have exposure to books, music and creative play opportunities at home. And the findings helped spark the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development report on early childhood education, which found Canada lagging behind other countries. But they've also helped fuel another trend: schools and even daycares have ratcheted up expectations, while teachers dish out grades, tests and homework to younger and younger kids. The term "school readiness," once denoting a child's ability to separate from her parents for a few hours without too much fuss and go to the bathroom by herself, now refers to her mastery of early numeracy and literacy skills. What's more, well-meaning remarks about potential developmental delays, such as lisps or mispronunciations like "persghetti," can send parents scurrying to find doctors and therapists to "fix" a "problem" that might otherwise disappear on its own over time.

Meanwhile, opportunities to prod kids on to high achievement levels seem endless. Private tutoring services and schools are at the ready, promising to jump start children's academic careers at ever younger ages. Then there's the panoply of extracurricular options. Organizations like Boy Scouts and the Royal Conservatory of Music—not to mention activities at school—vie for our kids' afternoons. And, according to Rosenfeld, in the past two decades the time kids spend in organized sports has doubled, while time devoted to hanging out, talking, eating dinner and vacationing with family members has dwindled. Even trips to the toy store have parents calculating if their newborn would benefit more from LeapFrog's light-flashing LeapStart Gym (it says "hello" in five languages) or the brightly striped and starred Lamaze Pop and Drop Activity Gym.

LEONARD Bernstein didn't start playing piano until he was 10; Albert Einstein was a late talker and poor student

It turns out, we adults may be our own worst enemy. More educated, older, and with fewer kids than previous generations, "parents today are a formidable cohort," says Linda Quirke, a sociology doctoral student at McMaster University researching parenting culture. That's led to an "expansion of parenting and a more intensive focus on the individual child." At the same time, we're bombarded with advice. Along with an explosion in parenting magazines in the 1990s, says Quirke, the proportion of how-to-nurture-your-kid's-brain articles in one Canadian women's magazine has tripled since the 1970s. Nor does it help that many of us work in an increasingly competitive job market that makes us fear for our kids' futures. Yes, children need to be stimulated. But are we falling prey to the fantasy that we can engineer the perfect child?

One thing is clear: many kids are faltering under school and parental expectations and the stresses of their busy lives. Anxiety is the most common cause of childhood psychological distress, affecting up to 20 per cent of North American youngsters. Child and adolescent psychiatrist Dr. Jane Garland says more than half the referrals to the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Clinic at the B.C. Children's Hospital in Vancouver are kids struggling with it. Heightened awareness is one reason, she says, but given all the opportunities open to children, there's a "demand for the individual to be superduper." And in households where parents either work three jobs to make ends meet or are constantly distracted by emails and phone calls, she adds, "everybody is on edge, including the five-year old."

MELANIE SHAPIRO doesn't see herself as part of a vanguard. But she does sense that her parenting style goes against the grain of certain cultural expectations—expectations she once shared. A few years after moving with her husband, James, to Edmonton from Bristol, England in 1993, she worried they were shortchanging their toddler's intellectual development. Emma's British cousins had started school at four, learning to count, recite their ABCs and read. "I was panick

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S



ing," says Shapiro. "What if we have to go back and she's behind?" So she borrowed some workbooks from her sister-in-law and sat down with Emma to learn her letters.

But a conversation with a neighbour who questioned the value of the exercise put an end to the academic prepping. Sensing there were better ways to spend time with her daughter, Shapiro ditched the workbooks and said, "Fine. We'll do art and playdough and music instead—or just fun stuff." So, says Shapiro, when Emma, now 11, and her three younger siblings were in the early grades, they "may not have been as good as some others at capitals and punctuation. But the content of their writing was much richer."

Granted, Shapiro is hardly an objective observer of her own children's work. Yet her judgment deserves serious consideration; the things kids learn through open-ended play *before* they start formal schooling do enrich the reading, writing and numeracy skills they later acquire. A child learns to make sense of the world, insists Anna Kirova, an expert in early childhood education at the University of Alberta, by interacting with others and exploring their environment. "Young children have their own explanations about how the world works," she says. They need to be given the opportunity to test these hypotheses, correct their misunderstandings and, with the help of more knowledgeable peers or adults, build on what they discover to be true. "This is very important in terms of the development of the brain."

There's a whole industry devoted to de-stressing kids, and it includes yoga classes

It's also a critical step on the road to literacy and numeracy, says Kirova, laying the basis for mastery of more specific academic skills. Letters and numbers, she notes as an example, are symbols, representing sounds and quantities. Learning them presupposes a child already grasps the concept of representation, or matching—something they can't pick up by letter-tracing exercises. They can, and do, however, internalize it through play and other social interactions. "If we ask a child to set the table and talk about it," says Kirova, "one plate for each person, one fork for each person, how about another spoon to go with the fork—well, this is one-to-one correspondence. Or, they could be matching rocks to sticks, it doesn't matter. The whole concept of matching is what stays with them." And *that's* what allows them, later on, to connect sounds to letters and quantities to numbers.

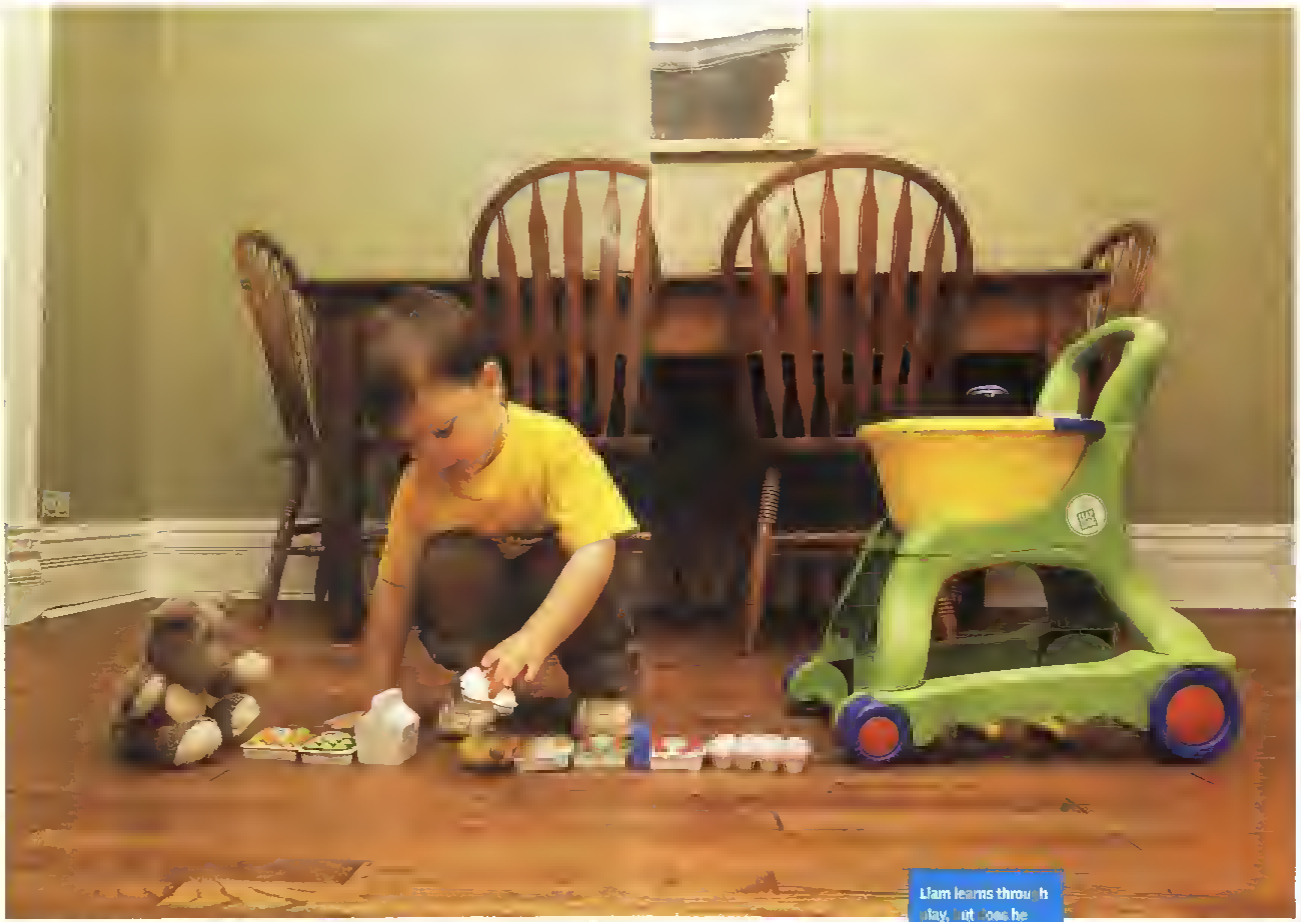
CHILDREN
Scandinavia, with its 99-per-cent literacy rate, don't get formal reading lessons until age seven

Yet pencil-and-paper learning is clearly enjoying a renaissance. Summer schools where, along with play-based curriculum, three- and four-year-olds are taught to count and write their names have taken off in the public system. But nowhere is the workbook revival more evident than in the runaway growth of the private tutoring industry. Quirke and other McMaster researchers charted a 60 per cent growth in Ontario

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S



HOW TOYS LOST THEIR INNOCENCE



Liam learns through play, but does he need an educational toy to teach him?

LET'S GO SHOPPING, *we'll have lots of fun. Let's go shopping!* That's the ditty Tad, the signature amphibian of LeapFrog products, endlessly sings to prompt kids to play with—and learn from—the yellow and green plastic shopping cart he inhabits. The voice and tune are gratingly upbeat and, given the rampant consumerism of kid culture today, the lyrics border on the obscene. So what was I thinking when I brought it home for my toddler last year?

I confess I don't have a good answer. Although the cart, according to the manufacturer's website, promises to teach "numbers, counting, quantities, more than/less than, colors, and healthy food groups and nutritional facts," I didn't really believe Liam would learn anything from it he couldn't pick up at daycare or home. And I was fully aware of the environmental costs: not only does all that plastic ultimately end up at the dump, but I'd be constantly tripping over it at home. However, what eventually sold me was the image of Liam pushing the thing around the house, loading and unloading its plastic bananas, muffins, peas and cereal boxes.

In other words, I bought it for the play value. But while any toy worth its salt will inspire creative, open-ended play, companies like LeapFrog are banking on something else: parental anxiety about whether kids are using their playtime *productively*. That's true even of the humble teddy bear. Liam's Tolo bear possesses silky, mink-coloured fur, just the right degree of squishiness and a friendly, if vacant, expression. Those attributes aren't enough in that cutthroat realm called Toyland. The tag hanging from its paw reminds shoppers that because Tolo toys are "designed intelligently, using colour, sound and feel as key stimulation aids, your child will quickly discover that learning is fun!"

What does it say about society if toys can't just be toys? Or when LeapFrog—which bills itself a manufacturer of *educational products*—also ranked as the third largest player last year in the $21-billion U.S. toy industry? The truth is, kids will be stimulated by and learn from almost anything—a toy truck, a Barbie, a set of measuring cups or a toothpaste box. It's unnecessary and downright puritanical to keep pushing education as the *raison d'être* of play. It's even worse that, in so many cases, education is narrowly defined as instruction in facts and figures.

Toymakers have eagerly capitalized on the early-childhood focus of recent years. It's now rare to peddle a toy without some reference to its brain-stimulating qualities, and companies with names like Baby Einstein have sprung up. They've engaged in "brilliant marketing, scaring parents to death," says Chris Byrne, an independent, U.S.-based toy industry analyst. "The whole idea is that we have to make better babies. If they're not reading by 18 months, they're not going to get into McGill and they're just going to be ruined." In fact, a LeapFrog Canada survey released last May found 74 per cent of mothers were "concerned about their children's ability to compete in the global economy," and 98 per cent were "providing their children with education-related activities." Of course, that may mean reading to them or singing the ABCs, the company acknowledges. But you don't have to be a dyed-in-the-wool cynic to suspect LeapFrog hopes the results will gel parents wondering if they're doing enough to keep up.

Products like Liam's shopping cart may well help children master basic numeracy, literacy and some geographic and scientific concepts. Though "they're not necessarily making smarter kids," notes Byrne, "they're giving them more information—cramming them with facts, as Dickens might say."

Byrne stresses the need for a "balanced toy box," by which he means a variety of goal-directed and open-ended toys. But he's also discovered from interviewing parents and teachers that, "all things being equal, at the end of first grade, kids who've had the educational toys and kids that haven't are reading at about the same level." If that's true, we may want to be wary of another, unintended, lesson inherent in educational toys—that simple child's play is a waste of time.

SUE FERGUSON

WITH the explosion of parenting magazines has come a slew of how-to-nurture-your kid's-brain articles

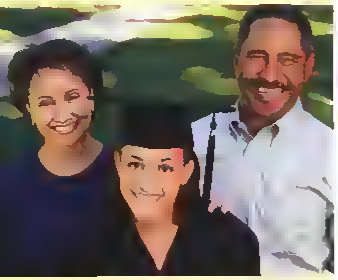
tutoring services since 1999. Offshoots of a few massive multinational firms, franchise-based tutoring agencies attract kids of varying needs, not just those at risk of failing. Enrolment in Canadian Kumon Math and Reading Centres (a Japanese company that uses worksheets with short, repetitive exercises, positive reinforcement and daily homework) has jumped by 40 per cent to 39,721 since 1997. Last year the company launched Junior Kumon, a more flexible program which promises to teach preschoolers the ABCs, basic phonics and addition, and how to write numbers and count beyond 200.

Monica Maione is convinced Kumon helped her two children. Samuel, 7, began classes a year and a half ago, in the final term of senior kindergarten. His teacher, says Maione, a Toronto dental hygienist, was "kind of lax" and didn't give out any homework. "I just sensed that my son wasn't at the level he should be" (a judgment his Grade One teacher confirmed). Weekly trips to the tutoring centre, and daily homework assignments have led to "a huge improvement," she adds. "He's finally at grade level, maybe a bit above."

Literacy experts agree that kids learn to read in different ways and at different ages. And, according to a University of Saskatchewan study, early readers hold no long-term advantage over late starters. Fostering a delight in reading and books—not skill-building—is critical to literacy, educators insist. In fact, Scandinavian countries, where literacy rates hover around 99 per cent, wait until kids are seven before giving them formal training in reading. Still, early reading continues to be prized by many. And Maione attributes Samuel's progress to his tutors—so much so that she enrolled her daughter, Mara, in Junior Kumon when she was 3. "I know some people think it might be a little early," she says. "My son at that age couldn't have sat at a desk" for a lesson. But Mara seemed ready and eager. A keen observer of her older brother, "she wanted to have homework," explains Maione. "And I

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wanted her to have a head start" in school.

In the public system, the amount of homework varies widely from school to school. But for plenty of kids, says Ann Douglas, author of 18 parenting advice books, "it's spiralling out of control." In fact, after switching her seven year old from a public to a Montessori school, she was happy to discover his new teachers didn't assign homework. They "believe children need time to play and develop," she says, "and do other kinds of learning that happens after hours." She's not alone in turning to a private school for a break from the revved up demands of the public system. About 15 per cent of 45 non-elite secular private institutions Quirke studied took a relaxed pedagogical approach, which included forgoing grades, grouping kids of different ages, and/or keeping homework at bay until seventh grade.

KIDS saying things like "persghetti" can send parents scurrying to find doctors and therapists to 'fix' a 'problem'

Meanwhile, Peterborough, Ont.-based Douglas allows her four kids (aged 7 to 16) only one after-school activity each. "I won't sacrifice the overall quality of family life for hockey practice," she says. And dinnertime is sacred. "It's when we reconnect," she says, "even if it's just to dole out bus fares." It may also boost kids' marks. a University of Michigan study found that eating together—because it involves sitting and talking with adults over a sustained period—was one of the strongest predictors of high achievement scores and fewer behaviour problems.

Toronto physician Anne Ryan, however, believes her two daughters' various physical activities are well worth the time spent: not only do the girls have lots of fun, but they're gaining physical self confidence and learning to be happy about their bodies. The calendar hanging on the Ryans' kitchen wall is awash in colour-coded markings: gold pen for Emma's six hours a week of dance classes, swimming and Brownies, blue for Sarah's seven hours of dance, swimming and Girl Guides, and green for other family events. Above it, to ensure she hasn't forgotten any last minute changes, Ryan has taped a printout of her Palm Pilot datebook. "It's hectic, but I draw the line at activities they'd have to practise, like piano," she says. "I've no interest in nagging them." While they may seem "over-structured," she acknowledges, some of their friends spend almost 12 hours a week in after-school activities.

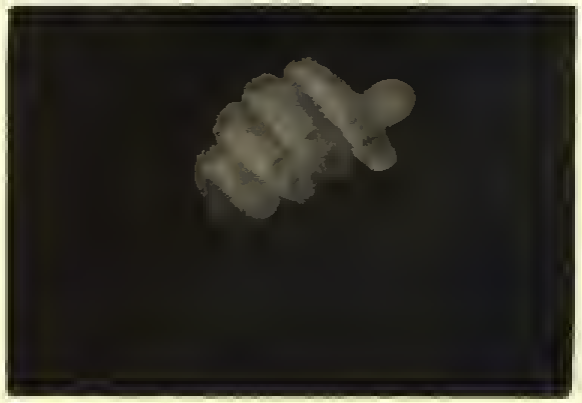
DE-STRESSING KIDS' lives takes some initiative—and now there's an industry devoted to it. Lunch-hour parenting seminars tutor high-powered executives and lawyers on how to stop excessive parenting. For kids, a whole new crop of after-school, handle-your-stress programs competes with Boy Scouts and drum lessons—everything from anger-management clinics to yoga classes. And many schools are teaching kids simple outdoor games, such as ball against-the wall and Chinese rope, from their parents' youth.

But there's a rich irony in our efforts to *teach* children how to play and relax. Instructing them in hopscotch, yoga and anti-bullying techniques may well do them some good. At the same time, our rush to find the cure for stress is indicative of just how hard it is for us to really lay off our kids. It's as if we don't quite trust them to come up with their own fun and games—assuming we've shut off the TV and the computer. And, what if they didn't do *anything*? What if they got *bored*? Well, according to slacker-mom advocate Mead Ferro, giving kids the opportunity to do nothing might be the biggest favour we could do them. She has no problem with her two kids taking up ballet or learning how to play an instrument, and "I would love it if [they] embraced the sport of skiing," she writes. "But being able to entertain themselves and figure out what to do with their own time are skills that outrank any of those. My parents didn't expect us to be superkids. They expected us to be independent. A kid probably can't be both."

"I think there's a lot to be said for being bored," agrees Edmonton's Shapiro. She recalls an episode from her early days as a mom. Pregnant with her third child, she usually placed her then two- and four year-old kids in front of a movie before stealing off to a nearby room to nap in the afternoon. But one day, when the video player broke, something beautiful happened. "Instead of hell breaking out, they actually played way more, and fought less," she says. Not only did Shapiro get her nap, "the two year old's language just blossomed." A child thriving while mom sleeps—imagine that. M

[A SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION]

POEM BY MICHAEL ONDAATJE
DRAWINGS BY DAVID BOLDUC



FOR HIS FIRST FORTY DAYS A CHILD IS GIVEN DREAMS OF PREVIOUS LIVES. JOURNEYS, WINDING PATHS, A HUNDRED SMALL LESSONS AND THEN THE PAST IS ERASED.
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BEWARE THE 'MORAL' SQUAD

Bush is determined to destroy the wall separating Church and State

TO THE REGULAR CHURCHGOERS who make up more than three-quarters of George W. Bush voters, the President spent the recent election campaign emphasizing the welcome message that he intended to remake America in his—and their—image. Loyalists will be tested by a simplistic formula, not very different from that used by their competing cadre of true believers—the radical sons of Islam. Both groups are dedicated to global supremacy, the Bushes in the name of democracy, their sworn annihilators, in the name of Allah, and each follows the same mantra: anyone not with them is against them.

All this sounds far too sophisticated and worldly for Canada to be concerned about. We continue to cling with increasing desperation to the image of ourselves as living in a peaceable kingdom, a sub-Arctic utopia with no design on anybody. I wish. This is one time Paul Martin will have to drop his usual stance of being a mugwump, sitting on a fence, his mug on one side, his wump on the other.

If we give in to the new, toxic American dream, we will surrender our aspirations of remaining independent and different; if we don't, we move outside its protective moat. It is a Catch-22, but the choice will have to be made, and soon. The litmus test will be our response to the Pentagon's insistence that we climb aboard its anti-ballistic missile defence system, which is as likely to protect us from nuclear attack as sending Mel Lastman to bargain with Osama bin Laden. We must reject that goofy interstellar fantasy, whatever the cost.

Bush's determination to act like a combination of John Wayne and Holy Roller has moved American politics beyond partisan boundaries. His faith-based initiatives, both domestic and foreign, are potentially so dangerous because there is nothing to stop him. The Republican-dominated Congress, and a Supreme Court that he will soon refashion to reflect his militant ideology, leave him a free hand to do as he will.

With nothing to lose (since he cannot run again), he will attempt to reverse the historic separation of Church and State on which the First (and most important) Amendment to the American Constitution is based. This "wall of separation" between Church and State became a basic tenet of American nationhood. The U.S. Supreme Court has traditionally interpreted the First Amendment as prohibiting government involvement in and support, even indirectly, of religious institutions. Nothing less than this fundamental aspect of nationhood, which allowed the U.S. to evolve into a dynamic, secular society, is now in serious jeopardy.

Globally, Bush may now feel that he can afford to ignore how the world really works (its system of collective security that has prevented world wars for more than half a century) and create his own reality. That's the hubris assumed by empires and the self-deluded emperors who lead them.

During Bush's first term, such revolutionary possibilities remained a theoretical threat, mainly because he had won office as a fluke and had no mandate to do anything. Of course, that didn't entirely stop him or his cohorts. One example, after 9/11, Gen. William "Jerry" Boykin, a deputy undersecretary of defence, toured the American South and Midwest, preaching to evangelical churches that bin Laden and Saddam Hussein would "only be defeated if we come against them in the name of Jesus." In one of his sermons, Boykin established the pecking order of moral authority. "George Bush was not elected by a majority of voters in the U.S.," he declared. "He was appointed by God." After the beatification, which climaxed with the Nov. 2 victory, Bush now qualifies in both capacities, the sacred and the political.

MARTIN will have to stop being a mugwump: sitting on a fence, his mug on one side, his wump on the other

What's most disturbing to an old-line Canadian liberal (small l) like me is that Bush has read the American mood perfectly. His support for the 11 state-sponsored constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriages reflected voter sentiment—including in Oregon, which is usually considered hang-loose territory. John Kerry, hardly qualified as a radical or even reformer, yet many of those states that supported him now exist in a culture as distinct from Bush Country as the North and South during the American Civil War. Political change will from now on originate in the pulpits, instead of on the streets or in the universities.

I have always liked Americans individually, but collectively they scare the hell out of me. Now I know why. That moral majority that elected Bush represents a way of looking at the world which I find foreign and threatening to the much gentler and more compassionate Canadian ethic. The attitudes and concerns our countries had in common have been compromised if not erased.

Bush's impressive victory has drawn a line in the sand between our two countries. To remain on the plus side of the Bush ledger would require us to enlist in his struggles to bring democracy (and Halliburton reconstruction contracts) to any country he considers a threat. That was what the President meant when he told his first post-election news conference: "I earned capital in the campaign, political capital, and now I intend to spend it."

Dubya's faith is less to man-made constitutions than to his saviour. (The one who saved him from alcohol, gambling, drugs and wasting his life as a family-coddled corporate roustabout.) Moral values to the evangelical Texan is a code phrase for a Christian fundamentalism. It's as if we turned Canada over to Stockwell Day. M



CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR

Hopes for a stronger loonie could lead to dramatic job losses

AS OF 9 P.M. ON NOV. 2, most Canadians watching the U.S. election returns doubtless felt pretty happy. They were hearing that trends looked very good for John Kerry.

I was watching the results in Manhattan, mostly on Fox—a channel not yet available to Canadians. I was pretty unhappy. The conservative commentators on the show were glum, and the liberals were upbeat. Clearly, they all knew something that wasn't obvious from the actual returns. The exit polls (which they were supposed to keep confidential) must have indicated a big win for Kerry. Jet-lagged from a trip to Europe, I decided to go to sleep.

At 3:30 a.m., I turned on the TV to discover that George W. Bush was apparently near victory. I flipped to CBS and watched Dan Rather in agony—and figured Bush was re-elected. Few Americans had worked harder to beat Bush than Rather, and he was watching the outcome in stunned disbelief.

Kerry carried just 19 states and the District of Columbia. Apart from Vermont, they all border an ocean or a Great Lake. Bush carried the rest—most of which are dissed by the coastal elites in New York City, Washington, L.A. and San Francisco as "flyover states." But so powerful was the trend to Bush that one of those boring states had the gall to vote out Democrat Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, one of Washington's most powerful people.

Bush's victory was historic: he won a majority of votes, both in ballots and in the electoral college, *and* gained seats in the Senate and the House. That's the first time for a sitting president to be re-elected and gain seats in both houses of Congress since Roosevelt in 1936—and the first for a Republican since 1900. He got 3.5 million more votes than Kerry, the first time since 1988 that any candidate got more than 50 per cent of votes cast. Overall turnout was a record—11.4 million more votes than in 2000—and Bush's vote count was up by 9.2 million. So Canadians must accept the fact that the nation whose purchases from Canada constitute 30 per cent or so of its GDP will continue to be led by someone they've been told is too stupid to take seriously.

But what if Bush isn't a dummy, and what if he decides to reinvigorate his economy by driving down the value of his dollar?

During the years when the loonie languished, Canadians collectively lamented what they considered the national embarrassment—their currency. Many prominent Canadians, particularly in the business community, openly recommended scrapping it in favour of what was then the Clinton currency. The near universal wish was for the loonie to be strong.

Well, Canada, you're getting your wish. But you'll recall the adage about being careful what you wish for. There's a strong likelihood the loonie is headed to par on the American dollar. The greenback is in a major bear market, propped up by the willingness of China and Japan (with tacit acquiescence from Washington) to buy hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of U.S. Treasury bonds. Otherwise, the loonie would already be trading in the 90 cent range.

But there are signs that those Asian powerhouses are reconsidering their currency strategies. By continuing to tie their currencies to the greenback, they're forcing their manufacturers and utilities to pay the full U.S. dollar prices for commodities—notably oil and base metals. Raw materials prices are up by more than 40 per cent in the past year, whereas prices for finished goods are up just a few percentage points. So the inflation that's worrying the bosses in Beijing is almost entirely commodity-driven. The best way to deal with that kind of problem is to let their currencies appreciate against the dollar. That would both lower their cost for imported raw materials and reduce the impact of price increases thereafter as global commodities continue their powerful bull market.

Once it becomes clear to global currency traders that Beijing and Tokyo aren't prepared to spend unlimited amounts propping up the dollar, there will be a frenzy to buy Canadian and Australian dollars, euros and Swiss francs. Even if the Asians were to continue to buy Treasuries, albeit at a reduced rate, any signs of weakness of the American economy would put enormous pressure on the greenback, because traders know that the Federal Reserve would be severely limited in its freedom to raise interest rates to defend the dollar.

The U.S. trade deficit is a horrendous 5.7 per cent of GDP, while Bush's budget deficit is another 3.6 per cent of GDP. Probably the only way Bush can get his economy moving at a clip that will cut his twin deficits is for his dollar to be devalued. It must fall far enough to shut down significant levels of competing production in foreign factories that rely on sales to American consumers. Think, for example, of auto parts plants in Ontario.

Bank of Canada governor David Dodge complains about Canada's low levels of productivity compared with the United States. According to him, Canadian manufacturers have been happy to rely on the cheap dollar. They haven't felt the need to invest heavily in labour saving technology and machinery. But once they lose that protective umbrella of a cheap currency, they'll be at risk from the full heat of American competitive forces.

For most Canadians, the loonie's recent price surge is unalloyed good news—and it comes in time for Sunbelt winter vacations. But for Canadian manufacturers and exporters, the currency news is scary.

David Hale, an American economist, notes that all serious devaluations of the U.S. dollar came when a Texan was either president or secretary of the treasury. Historically, the South, a commodity-producing region, has wanted a cheap dollar to export its production. Wall Street has always favoured a strong dollar, because it's good for bonds, and is usually supportive of stocks. The strong dollar policy of the Clinton era was the brainchild of former treasury secretary Robert Rubin, the New Yorker who had been co-chairman of Goldman Sachs. He presided over a 45 per cent appreciation of the dollar against the European currencies and an 18 per cent rise against the loonie. While that lowered U.S. interest rates and inflation, it cost millions of American manufacturing jobs.

WHAT if Bush isn't a dummy and decides to reinvigorate his economy by driving down the value of the U.S. dollar?

Bush knows a cheap dollar will restore American competitiveness, but he doesn't dare talk publicly of driving down the dollar. That could produce the kind of dollar crash that occurred in 1987—which triggered the stock market crash. What he'll try is a stealth devaluation, letting the currency markets do his work for him. If it reaches a competitive level by late 2005, the trade deficit would start to shrink in 2006 and the United States would be on the road back to global competitiveness in 2007.

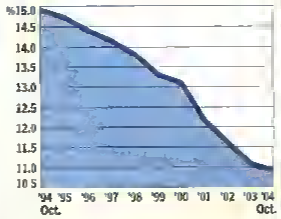
In this election—as in all his previous contests—the media and his opponents have considered Bush too dumb to win. So he must, apparently, be very lucky. Canadian manufacturers facing a rising loonie must pray his luck has run out.

Enjoy your cheap winter vacation. It'll be even cheaper next year.

Chicago-based Donald Coxe is Global Portfolio Strategist, BMO Financial Group. dcoxe@macleans.ca

MANUFACTURING MALAISE

U.S. manufacturing jobs as a percentage of total nonfarm employment



SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS



After an historic victory, a challenge to restore American competitiveness



KEN CEDENO/KRT

RAY ® MCNEW/GETTY IMAGES



A CASE FOR MARIJUANA INC.

Legalizing Canada's biggest cash crop is all about supply and demand

WHEN THE DAY finally comes that this country legalizes the cultivation and sale of marijuana, compassion will not figure into the decision. Nor will weed be legitimized for the sake of any real or imagined medicinal benefits. And it won't be the various appeals to personal liberty that will swing the pendulum of our antiquated drug laws. No, when Ottawa finally abandons the costly and futile effort to maintain pot prohibition, it will be the inescapable logic of the market that casts the deciding vote.

Hard as it may be to believe, Canada's biggest agricultural product is an illegal plant. Various estimates peg this country's cannabis trade at considerably more than $7 billion in annual sales—twice as much as pig farming brings in, and almost three times more than wheat does. Even the mighty cattle industry, at $5.2 billion a year in revenue, lags behind the marijuana business for sheer size. There is no formal market and cultivation has to be done surreptitiously, and still, nothing brings in the green like grass does.

So while timid federal politicians debate baby-step improvements to existing drug laws, a thriving industry carries on, completely indifferent to the government's dithering. The latest turn in the drug debate came this month when the Martin Liberals re-tabled legislation to decriminalize possession of small amounts of cannabis, while simultaneously proposing to increase maximum sentences for cultivation and trafficking. It's the same old drug war rolled in new papers. And even this may be too radical for parliamentarians.

Thus far, no one has had the courage to stand up and call for real progress: legalization, regulation and taxation. As a result, the massive financial opportunity offered by making marijuana a commercial product remains out of reach. And while Ottawa fiddles, Canada smokes. Every day across this country people from all walks of life are getting high, getting hungry and falling asleep. If this sounds like a crisis to you, then you're qualified to be the Conservative justice critic.

Earlier this year, The Fraser Institute released a study of the British Columbia pot industry, estimating that the Canadian market alone was worth as much as $4.4 billion in 2000. That doesn't include exports. And the market is growing: according to the study, the number of Canadian pot smokers has risen by two thirds in a decade. "To anyone with even a passing acquaintance with modern history, it is apparent that we are reliving the experience of alcohol prohibition of the early years of the last century," the report said.

The same conservative think tank that normally calls for privatized health care and tax cuts is now championing legalized pot, projecting that government could easily reap over $2 billion in annual revenue by taking control of the industry. This should be a sign to anyone in Ottawa with the guts to face it: when the neo-cons and hippies start agreeing on policy issues, it's a pretty good sign you've fallen behind a social trend.

NO POLITICIAN has yet had the courage to stand up and call for real progress: legalization, regulation and taxation of the cannabis industry

Just as importantly, the report points out, every dollar reaped by government regulation of the pot industry would be a dollar taken away from the criminal gangs that run the industry today. We'd save billions more by eliminating the staggering costs of a losing war. In 2001, Auditor General Sheila Fraser said the federal government was spending close to $500 million a year fighting the drug trade. Roughly 95 per cent of that goes to enforcement and policing, and two-thirds of the country's 50,000 annual drug arrests are for cannabis offences.

The big question, for most lawmakers, is how the United States would react to cannabis legalization in Canada. Opposition politicians are already fretting over potential trade retaliation, and U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci warned last week that border traffic might be slowed if our drug laws are significantly relaxed. That would be a shame, for both countries. Trade is a two-way street, and if the U.S. wants to hobble its own economy for the sake of keeping the scourge of marijuana at bay, then that's their right. But I suspect the bluster would pass soon enough. The amount of marijuana seized at the Mexican-U.S. border is more than 100 times greater than the amount caught heading south from Canada, and that hasn't dampened the Bush administration's eagerness for closer ties with Mexico.

As for the other familiar yarns about the dangers and evils of smoking a little weed—that it's addictive, that it is a "gateway" to hard-core drug use, etc.—it's worth reading the 2002 report of the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs. It bluntly explodes many of those myths, propagated for decades by police forces and morality squads. After exhaustive study, it concludes that pot is a minimal health risk when used in moderation, and poses fewer social costs than other—legal—vices, like booze and cigarettes. In the words of the committee, "It is time to recognize what is patently obvious: our policies have been ineffective, because they are poor policies."

Two years have passed since the Senate recommended legalizing and regulating marijuana along lines similar to the tobacco industry. Perhaps one day the feds might find the courage to heed that advice and harness the power of supply and demand. In the meantime, all that potential tax revenue will keep rolling away while politicians and moralists keep blowing smoke.

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THREE-DOWN NATION

The Grey Cup stays true to its True North roots





FOR THE CANADIAN Football League, it's sometimes better to be lucky than good. In a remarkably disaster-free 2004 season, the CFL got a good bounce even from its one notable blunder of the year. On-field officials mistakenly called a no-yards penalty on the last play of an Oct. 22 game between the Calgary Stampeders and B.C. Lions, costing the Stamps a victory, highlighting some glaring shortcomings in the league's officiating.

But thanks to the post-game controversy—Calgary fans were furious, and the team's brass petitioned the league to have the result overturned, to no avail—TV networks rebroadcast the play for days. And what a play. The Stampeders exploited one of those quirky rules left over from the CFL's rugby roots and made it work. With no time left on the clock and trailing 19-17, Calgary quarterback Khari Jones threw a short forward pass to receiver Mike Juhasz, who promptly punted the ball deep into the B.C. end. The surprised Lions were slow to react, which allowed Stampeder receiver Sulecio Sanford, who was behind Juhasz when the ball was kicked, to race downfield, scoop up the loose ball and dash into the end zone for what should have been the winning touchdown. It was daring, unpredictable, thrilling to watch—and 100-per-cent Canadian. "It was the perfect call by the coach, the perfect kick, everything worked out perfectly," Sanford said.

More than four million fans will tune into the CFL's championship game this week, hoping for a little more of that gridiron magic. It isn't because of marketing or luck. It's because it's the 92nd Grey Cup, a national sporting event with more history than the Stanley Cup finals. Even occasional fans recall classic Cups, like the 43-40 barnburner between Saskatchewan and Hamilton in 1989 that the Rough Riders won on the final play of the game. Games are often marked by the extreme conditions in which they were contested, like the 1962 game that was stopped midway through by an impenetrable fog that descended on the field in Toronto; it was completed the next day. Then there was the 1996 thriller between Edmonton and Toronto, played in a blizzard that dumped more than a foot of snow onto the frozen turf in Hamilton. Who knows what'll happen this Sunday?

Even casual fans know about the fog in 1962, and the blizzard of 1996

CFL football has a peculiar and appealing Canadianness, which plays well in an era when Canada is becoming more politically distinct from our southern neighbour. Hockey, baseball and basketball are all continental sports, says David Mills, a history prof at the University of Alberta, whereas the three-down game is unique. "CFL football has remained largely unchanged, whether it's the single point on missed field goals or the bigger field," Mills adds. "The game is just different." The CFL also lives in places other pro sports ignore. "It thrives in smaller cities like Regina and Winnipeg," Mills says. "It's a magnificent way to build a sense of community, and a team gives that community a real identity."

And whereas the Super Bowl will never be played in Green Bay, the Grey Cup reinforces the point that every CFL team, no matter how big its market, plays on a level field. This week it's being hosted by Ottawa, next year it's in Vancouver and in 2006 it's in Winnipeg. That inclusiveness, says commissioner Tom Wright, is the CFL's great strength. "Hockey may be our national game," he says, "but the CFL is our national league."

THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR/CP; MOE DOIRON/CP

MAD, MAD WORLD

Canada's fall non-fiction list is rife with global skulduggery and personal scandal

IT'S HARDLY surprising to find non-fiction titles travelling in packs. Canadian pundits were bound to comment on the rapidly shifting state of the world, particularly to the degree those changes were caused by the actions of our eternal obsession, the United States. And it was inevitable that the widespread fascination, not to say *schadenfreude*, felt over Conrad Black's spectacular fall would inspire writers to pen new accounts or update old tomes. Still, it's presumably a coincidence that enough eminent people, from Sheila Copps to Norman Jewison, decided to justify their lives to make 2004 the Year of the Memoir. Some of the season's notable Canadian non-fiction:

CURRENT AFFAIRS Iraq's descent into bloody chaos since U.S. President George W. Bush declared "major combat operations" complete 18 months ago has only intensified the polemical war over the motives and justice of the American invasion. Despite the failure to find weapons of mass destruction—Washington's original cause of war—supporters still insist the U.S. is saving the Iraqi people by turning dictatorship into democracy. Opponents see *real politik* at work, specifically a cynical grab for oil, an analysis presented with passion and impressive detail by Linda McQuaig in **It's the Crude, Dude** (Doubleday).

She begins with the obvious. The U.S. has never shown any interest in Mideast democracy (on the contrary), while oil is a strategic necessity for both the American economy and the country's military effectiveness. If Iraq had none, the U.S. would exhibit no more interest in its fate than it shows for sub-Saharan Africa. McQuaig then describes the almost symbiotic relationship between the oil sector and the Bush White House, particularly in the case of Vice-President Dick Cheney, considered Satan incarnate by the Left. With considerable restraint, McQuaig merely calls Cheney "perhaps the most powerful man in the administration."

Case closed? Running throughout *It's the Crude, Dude* is McQuaig's palpable frustration with the reluctance—naturally strongest in America, but widespread among the country's traditional friends—to admit what is undeniable to her. She's surely right to point to the way the Bush administration has continually, in the teeth of the evidence, insisted on a link between Saddam Hussein and 9/11, and to the apparently unshakable belief among Americans that their nation—alone in human history—invades other lands solely for altruistic reasons. But there is a far more significant problem with the case for oil as prime motive: it doesn't add up.

Consider Gwynne Dyer's disturbing **Future: Tense** (McClelland & Stewart), an ultimately more convincing explanation for Iraq. You don't have to invade oil-producing countries—at a cost of US$120 billion and 1,100 American lives (and counting)—to get oil, Dyer points out. "You just write them a cheque." Most OPEC economies are so dependent on foreign exchange that they peddle their oil to anyone, in fact, half of Iraq's oil exports went to the U.S., of all countries, in the month before Bush's invasion.

Dyer finds the root of the assault in what he calls the neo-conservative project, "a half-crazed manifesto for American world domination." While its more radical proponents are found in the Republican party, there is considerable support across American public life for the idea that the U.S. should seize the unipolar moment—the respite between the implosion of the Soviet Union and the inevitable rise of China—to cement its currently unchallengeable global superiority. That means the U.S. must break free of the multilateral restraints it helped foster after the Second World War—including the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty—and find a new justification for the immense military might built up during the Cold War. "Rogue nations" and the terrorist attacks of 2001 provided it. The electrified post-9/11 atmosphere, "Iraq practically nominated itself" as a means of showing the world that all the rules had changed.

The danger in the situation is far greater than a possible surge in Islamist terrorism, according to Dyer, who insists: "The United States needs to lose the war in Iraq as soon as possible. Even more urgently, the whole world needs the United States to lose the war in Iraq." If the Americans are still there five years from now, still engaged in their "adventure in unilateralism," what's now left of international institutions will be shredded. "The UN will start to die," Dyer warns, as the other great powers start to take the old, bad steps to protect their interests that they took in the generation before 1914. Inherently dangerous alliances and arms races will follow.

Other exceptional books on the state of the planet include **A War Against Truth** (Raincoast), Paul William Roberts' angry, deeply personal and finely written account of the Iraq invasion, and **Rushing to Armageddon** (M&S), in which Mel Hurtig issues an urgent warning against Canada's involvement in U.S. missile defence plans. In **A Short History of Progress** (Anansi), the book version of this year's CBC Massey Lectures, historian Ronald Wright offers an elegant and learned discussion of what the rise and fall of past civilizations predict about our own: nothing good.



IT'S THE CRUDE, DUDE
Linda McQuaig
Doubleday
$35.95



FUTURE TENSE
Gwynne Dyer
McClelland & Stewart
$19.99



McQuaig argues passionately that oil lies behind the invasion of Iraq

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

MEMOIRS It's impressive what a headline-grabbing spat with the Prime Minister's Office can bring an ex-politician. Since Sheila Copps accused Prime Minister Paul Martin of having tried to gut medicare a decade ago—prompting noisy denials from the PMO—her book **Worth Fighting For** (Douglas Gibson/M&S) has received the most attention of the fall's memoirs. It has easily outdistanced, at least in the national media, **Never Retreat, Never Explain, Never Apologize** (Key Porter), by political opponent Deborah Grey. But the two volumes make apt bookends: two women in what's still a man's business, both of whom flourished under one leader and struggled under his successor. As a Liberal and a cabinet minister, Copps moved in a power orbit well above Grey, but she also had farther to fall. Perhaps the saddest reflection of that is in their books' forewords. Grey's has an affectionate tribute from Preston Manning, Copps, tone-deaf to the end, includes a salute from Jean Chrétien so perfunctory that it's derisive.

Grey is only 52, the age Copps will turn later this month. For a true *life* story, readers could turn to **This Terrible Business Has Been Good to Me** (Key Porter) by Norman Jewison, 78. The acclaimed director of *In the Heat of the Night* and *Moonstruck* happily tells tales about some of the most famous actors of his time. For a Canadian, Jewison is a quintessential mid-20th-century American. He made movies satirizing Cold War paranoia and savaging racial prejudice in the Deep South, protested the war in Vietnam and practised a very Californian religious eclecticism. Jewison found his worst moment in Robert Kennedy's assassination in 1968, and his apotheosis in his 1999 lifetime achievement Oscar. But he also moved back to Canada in 1978 and helped found the Canadian Film Centre, to better nurture a homegrown industry.

Other intriguing memoirs include Peter C. Newman's **Here Be Dragons** (Douglas Gibson/M&S). Previously excerpted in *Maclean's*, it retells with wit and honesty a public life lived in large part at the epicentre of Canadian events. The author of 23 previous books, including such classics of political journalism as *Renegade in Power*, Newman is equally open about his tumultuous private life. James Laxer's offbeat account of growing up the child of underground members of the Communist party is the subject of **Red Diaper Baby** (Douglas & McIntyre). It describes, among other surreal developments, how the future NDP dissident and his little brother came to be the only kids on their Toronto block cheering for the North during the Korean War.

Far, far from the world's sound and fury, and the rationalizations of most autobiographers, lies the still centre of **There is a Season** (M&S). This astonishing memoir, beautiful in its prose and terrifying in its



honesty, is poet Patrick Lane's account of a year in his life and garden. It opens in January of 2000, with Lane barely two months out of the rehab centre he entered after 45 years of heavy drinking. For the first time in decades he feels alive but in agony, fragile and hopeful at the same moment, "as if I had come out from some shadowed place into light for the first time." Standing in his garden, Lane knows that if he's going to survive this new life it will be by the grace of his small patch of Vancouver Island dirt.

Without the blocker of drink and drugs, memories of his childhood's "dark infinities" flood Lane, now 65, as he slowly tends his land. Images of a harsh life in the B.C. Interior in the 1940s include the dead baby Lane found in the woods, a friend's father who prostituted his Down's Syndrome daughter for 25 cents a customer, the rape of a native woman—and, stunningly, "moments of such joy that to remember them makes me reel through the thin air of the past." Most revolve around his mother reading to him and his siblings—teaching him to treasure words, their rhythms and patterns, instilling them in his "bones and breath."

Lane writes as evocatively of the birds, animals, plants and insects of his garden as he does of his past, including a tiny, perfect gem recorded near year's end—a suspense filled, five-page account of two spiders mating. It's a joy to watch Lane patiently weave himself back together, combining his two extraordinary talents—an acute power of observation and an effortless gift for words that is truly embedded in his bones. *There is a Season* is a masterpiece.

Lane's account of a year in his life and garden is terrifying in its honesty

BIOGRAPHY Newspaper magnate Conrad Black's troubles over the past year have inspired Richard Siklos to update and reissue his 1995 biography, **Shades of Black** (M&S), and have, presumably, considerably altered the direction of George Tombs' long-planned study, **Lord Black** (BT Publishing), commenced in 2001. Only *Wrong Way* (Penguin), by *Globe and Mail* reporters Jacquie McNish and Sinclair Stewart, is written entirely in response to recent events. All three books contain the same juicy bits about Black and his glamorous wife, Barbara Amiel, that have enthralled onlookers for years—the multi-million dollar homes, the society parties, the jewellery and the other extravagances—and even in that regard they're matched, and occasionally outdone, by the relevant chapters of Newman's memoirs. But *Wrong Way* does the best job of placing Black's fall in context.

In the post-Enron world of the past few years, which has seen a sea change in the very idea of corporate governance, Black vs. the shareholders was a modern-day version of immovable object vs. irresistible force. Black ran his companies in a high-handed fashion that would have driven medieval barons to rebel against their king, and shareholders already incensed by tales of fiscal shenanigans in other companies simply stopped deferring to him. A wiser, or at least more humble, man might have seen the coming storm and defused the anger with timely apologies and restitution. But Black stuck to his Napoleonic persona instead and proved, in the unlikely Waterloo of a Delaware court, that character is destiny. M



THERE IS A SEASON
Patrick Lane
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WRONG WAY
Jacquie McNish & Sinclair Stewart
Penguin
$38

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MISSIONARY POSITIONS

One eccentric pioneers American sexology, another invents Peter Pan

BEFORE THE PILL, before AIDS, before free love, safe sex, gay pride, *Cosmo* orgasm advice, tantric workshops and tangerine flavoured condoms ... In the Beginning was Kinsey. The Sexual Revolution is usually dated from the '60s, but the Big Bang that sparked it all happened back in 1948, when Indiana University professor Alfred Kinsey published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. An academic tome that became an instant bestseller, it started all this public chatter about sex, turning our most intimate activity into pop discourse. (Now, of course, people can't shut up about it.) Interviewing some 18,000 Americans about their sex lives in the course of his career, Kinsey shattered taboos about premarital intercourse, extramarital intercourse, masturbation and homosexuality. His studies revealed that all were far more common than had been assumed. Accepted ideas of what's "normal" disintegrated as a notion of sexual democracy took root in North America. And it seems only fitting that, at the dawn of the consumer age, this new sense of sexual entitlement was achieved through that promiscuous form of American suffrage: the poll.

After the recent presidential election, with the Republicans turning the tide back to moral conservatism, Kinsey's eccentric quest—as depicted in a compelling new movie—seems more relevant than ever. In a culture where avid fascination with sex now slides like quicksilver between the pornographic and puritanical, we see Kinsey dissecting eros with the dispassionate voyeurism of a zoologist (his original profession). He pioneered sexology in America, but with his second volume, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), Kinsey became a media pariah and the target of a congressional witch hunt, drawing confessions of masturbation, infidelity and lesbianism from America's mothers and daughters was going too far. He lost funding and, in 1956, his weak heart battered by stress, died at age 62.

As portrayed in *Kinsey*, the tragic arc of his life serves as an incandescent prologue to the Sexual Revolution to come. There's the same thrill of discovery and infatuation, the smashing of taboos, the utopian vision of sexual freedom as an unwritten constitutional right—then the inevitable backlash. Kinsey claimed only to be documenting sexual deviation. But as an obsessive collector of carnal detail, holding a mirror up to America's secret life, he was also testing that shifting line between reportage and pornography.

Now, of course, every kink is a proud subgenre with its own website and cable channel. And if Kinsey were alive today, he might be tempted to study sexual behaviour in the movies, which continue to tap fresh taboos. In *P.S.*, Laura Linney seduces a young man who she sees as a surrogate for her dead high school sweetheart. In *Birth*, Nicole Kidman takes a bath with a 10-year-old boy she believes is her dead husband. In Jerry Ciccoritti's Canadian psychodrama, *Blood*, a junkie begs her brother to take part in a threesome for money. And, pushing the envelope of art house twaddle, French feminista Catherine Breillat pioneers garden rake penetration in *Anatomy of Hell*.

In *Kinsey*, Linney and Neeson take a measure of the scientist's manhood

Of course, none of these films pretend to be just about sex. Art always wants to be about something else. But *Kinsey* really *is* about sex—and the emotional consequences of the largely male compulsion to observe and measure eros with experimental sangfroid. Written and directed with stunning sensitivity and wit by Bill Condon (*Gods and Monsters*), the movie introduces Kinsey (Liam Neeson) as the sickly son of a fire and brimstone preacher (John Lithgow). Finding solace in nature, he defies his dad to pursue a career in biology. With a passion that consumes him for two decades, Kinsey becomes a world expert on the gall wasp, collecting over five million specimens of a tiny insect with big wings that can't fly (symbolism like this you can't make up). What amazes him is that no two gall wasps are alike, a miracle of diversity that he carries into his sex research—there's no such thing as "normal," just degrees of "rare" and "common."

Kinsey stumbles into his new vocation



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Opposite Winslet, Depp plays a beatific surrogate dad in *Finding Neverland*

after married students ask him for sexual advice. He ends up teaching a sex education class, an explicit alternative to a "hygiene course" taught by a prig who urges abstinence (Tim Curry). And what begins as a class questionnaire snowballs into a vast survey conducted by a team of interviewers. Kinsey's conclusion: "America is awash with sexual activity, only a small portion of it sanctioned by society."

The scientist's mission is set against the story of his lifelong romance with a former student, Clara McMillen (Laura Linney). On their wedding night, both are awkward virgins. But by the time Kinsey's sex study is in full swing, so is his marriage. The team of researchers he's recruited to interview people about their sexual histories turns into a kind of cultish free love lab. There's a wonderfully clumsy, tender scene in which a bisexual team member, Clyde Martin (Peter Sarsgaard), seduces Kinsey by asking him where he fits on his own 0-6 scale of homosexual tendencies. Soon Kinsey and his wife are toying with open marriage, and all the heartbreak that entails. As a woman in love with an impossible man, Linney brings a mercurial wit to the role of Clara. And Neeson's gently heroic portrayal of Kinsey has an emotional bravery that should make him a leading Oscar contender.

Kinsey gives the scientist his due as a champion of erotic enlightenment, but also portrays him as a bit of a freak, a workaholic hooked on barbiturates who persists in viewing man as just another mammal—and barely flinches when interviewing a monster who boasts of having sex with hundreds of children and 22 animal species. But, with suprising tenderness, *Kinsey* bridges the abyss between sex and love, leaving us with a lump in our throat—and a watchword from its subject that seems as apt now as 50 years ago: "The forces of chastity are massing once again."

Finding Neverland is another biopic about an eccentric genius whose behaviour attracted some controversy. It tells the story of *Peter Pan* playwright J. M. Barrie (Johnny Depp) who neglects his wife (Radha Mitchell) to dote on four young boys and their recently widowed mother (Kate Winslet). This is juicy material, but *Finding Neverland* is too intent on hagiography to exploit it. After the torrid *Monster's Ball* (2001), director Marc Forster has gone to the other extreme. Played as an asexual saint by Depp, Barrie is too beatific, and bland, to be true. There's some magic as Barrie defies skeptics with the audacious staging of *Peter Pan*, and the film ends with heart-rending sentiment. But it relies on stock characters—from Barrie's crusty producer (Dustin Hoffman) to the boys' imperious grandmother (Julie Christie). And while Depp is always a pleasure to watch—here his charm is warmed by a soft Scottish burr—he's trapped in a timid script. As he plays pirate games with the kids, you get nostalgic for the rock 'n' roll mischief he brought to *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Neverland was never meant to be this innocuous

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LOOK BEYOND THE LEG BRACE

You'll see a whole person who just happens to have a disability

I HAVE THIS FRIEND WHO, on occasion, will call me a cripple. I hadn't heard from her in a month or two, but when she called recently, the conversation started with her customary "Hey Crip! How's it going?"

The word cripple was a nasty schoolyard insult, the adult world referred to me as handicapped and disabled before differently abled and physically challenged came along. I prefer to say I am a person who just happens to live with, and manage, my disability. So it's no surprise to my friend when I affect a blase tone and heave an exasperated sigh.

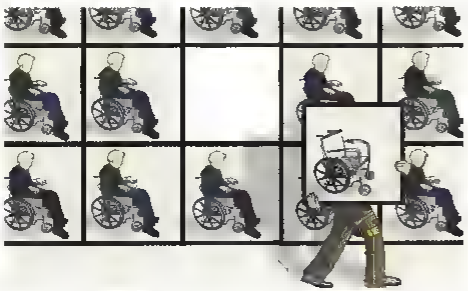
"Whatever, lady. I'm busy, what do you want?" I chuckle a little and can almost see her smile on the other end of the line; it's an understanding born of friendship.

"What are you doing right now?" she asks.

"Sitting at my desk, writing," I say. "Why?"

"Want to come to Quebec?" she answers. "I've got a handbook that needs work and some translation I need done." Then she adds, "Pack winter boots." I panic as visions of icy sidewalks, twisted ankles and a broken $800 leg brace dance in my head. But a week and a half later I'm in Val d'Or in northern Quebec.

It's an experience shot through with the sweetest irony for me. I may have spastic diplegia, a form of cerebral palsy, but the reason my friend can call me "cripple" and I can laugh it off is the same reason I can pick up and go to another province on such short notice. She and I both know that I am many things, but I am *not* a cripple.



I can see my reality—as others perceive it—any week on TV. Pick a telethon, it doesn't matter which one. I'm the one standing wordlessly next to the presenter, or moving unsteadily on my crutches, or hunched over my walker, but still smiling. The host is a local celebrity who tells you about my courage, my zest for life despite such a hardship, and how, "if you contribute to [insert name of organization here], we'll be able to give/send/buy Mark access to some much-needed services/activities/mobility aids. Your donation helps so many people like Mark lead active/happy/healthy/normal lives." Cue close-up of smiling sufferer and/or supporting family members. Watch the screen fade to black and open your wallets. I'd be helpless if you didn't.

Don't get me wrong: were it not for my leg brace and the infrastructure that built it, I wouldn't be able to go out and get milk, much less spend eight weeks in Quebec. But the very system that's kept me on my feet also has a very screwed-up idea of who I am.

When the need arises, I apply for any number of disability-related benefits or exemptions that may be available to me. But to qualify for many of them, I have to prove that I'm the closest thing to broken this side of an ailing health care system. Not that that's a problem: in addition to the spastic diplegia, I stutter heavily at times, and I'm deaf in my left ear. But the funding agency wants my doctor and posse of specialists to back me up on that; the agency requires a professional opinion. So the posse shakes its collective head in disbelief and prepares for yet another run at the bureaucracy.

Talk about confusing. Focus on my abilities and tell me that the world is full of accessible, wonderful opportunity. Or focus on my disabilities and assure me that I'm quite incapable of supporting myself without outside intervention. Which version do I trust?

Fact is, I'm a university graduate. Among other things, I spent two years volunteering at a hospice with dying people and their families. I have a career as a freelance writer. I've travelled widely, visited relatives in Manitoba and Holland. I've seen the Eiffel Tower up close, too. Never mind the screamingly painful callus on my left foot—I was in Paris! (Though I've never again worn in a new ankle-foot orthotic device while on holiday.)

I grew up on Vancouver Island, where I owned a car for a few short but memorable years. My passengers and I flew up and down the island's highways and byways as far and as often as we could go. After my car died a natural death, I bought a bus pass and moved next door to a grocery store. I've clambered over rocks and tree stumps, navigated dusty, uneven terrain and followed potential lovers through sun dappled woods to gorgeous beaches. A smitten man will go to any lengths for love, my leg brace and I will just get there a few minutes later.

My balance isn't great, so I don't run. I request wheelchairs at airports so I don't miss my connections, no matter the distance between gates. I make use of preboarding calls to navigate narrow aisles and avoid getting jostled by the crowd. When it comes down to it, my disability is a matter of planning ahead rather than trying to fix what ain't broke. That's how I managed my early morning flight from Toronto, via Montreal, to Val-D'Or, where my friend met me at the airport. "Good to see you, Mark!" she called out.

"Great to be here," I said, and got down to the business of just being me.

Mark Lindenburg is a Toronto writer and editor. To comment: overtoyou@macleans.ca

ILLUSTRATION BY LEIF PARSONS



DAY OFF



WEEKEND



SABBATICAL

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BACKTALK

John Intini's Sentences 54 | Bestsellers List 54 | Money's Worth 58



Actress benches herself to focus on a prime-time ratings game

Peregrym hopes that sex talk will sell in a heated battle for her show's survival

Although former high-school sports star **Missy Peregrym** would love to relive her glory days on the basketball court and soccer pitch, starring in the new ABC teen drama *Life As We Know It* is taking up most of her time. "I could maybe join a rec team," says Peregrym, the Vancouver-based model turned-actress. "But the thing is, I don't like playing with people who don't take things seriously. I'd go crazy."

That's probably a good thing, since Peregrym and her cast mates—including **Kelly Osbourne**—need to focus all their competitiveness on the heated Thursday night ratings war (in which their show is taking a beating from *C.S.I.* and *The Apprentice*). "Waiting around for the numbers Friday morning is tough," says Peregrym, 22. "So far we're safe and our teen demographic is going up." That shouldn't be a big surprise considering the hour-long show consists mainly of high-schoolers talking about sex. "We don't sugar coat things," says Peregrym, who spent her school days finding ways to skip class. "Those who think the show is edgy just don't want to admit that kids do these things. The show is just honest." JOHN INTINI

> "Everyone has opinions of Kelly based on how she's been portrayed on her reality show. But she's not that person at all—she's totally sweet."
> —Peregrym, on her famous co-star

BUZZ LIST



Sorry fans, but the big-screen reunion won't likely include **David Hasselhoff**. Producers must have seen his dorky cameo in the new *SpongeBob SquarePants* film.

MISSY PEREGRYM
Vancouver actress joins Ozzy's daughter on new teen drama.

When this first-person shooter hit stores, computer geeks rang up a record US$125 million in sales. More proof that gun control is a good thing.



Paul Reubens begins a new big adventure with *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* on DVD and is planning a feature film. He might want to consider an image coach this time around.

In an act of girl-band solidarity, **Beyonce** records *Destiny Fulfilled* with old bandmates—or rather, her bona fide backup vocalists.

Creator is burying the acclaimed drama after next season—leaving fans a long grieving period, and plenty of time for a write-in campaign.

The **Donald** and **Richard Branson** trade swipes in the press. Commoners wish they'd each buy a desert island and move there.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETE SOOS AN WEST/PA PHOTO: TIME LIFE PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES



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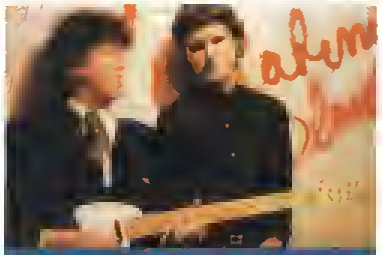
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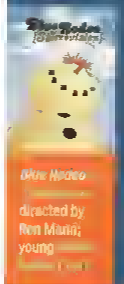
ROGERS Your World Right Now



Q&A | Down memory lane with Jim Cuddy

Greg Keelor and **Jim Cuddy** first called themselves the Hi-Fi's, then went by Fly to France while living and gigging in New York City. But we know them best as **Blue Rodeo**'s front men. That band celebrates its 20th anniversary this week with a gorgeous looking and sounding DVD. Cuddy, 48, spoke with Senior Editor **Shanda Deziel** about the two-decade milestone.

What is it like to see the old TV performances?
In the early years our faces don't give any indication that we're aware of all the things that are happening to us. We're on the stage at the Canadian Country Music Awards (1989) and there's such a nice innocence on our faces and an unawareness of being popular or even lasting.



Blue Rodeo directed by Ron Mann; young

The DVD booklet says the band name was a nod to the Elvis Costello album *Almost Blue*.
I read that and phoned Greg and said, "Is this true?" As far as I remember we were trying to come up with a psychedelic cowboy name. Greg says he was listening to **Patsy Cline** and *Almost Blue* at the time. He came up with the name, I think.

How have you kept the partnership together?
We started as friends and remained friends. If there's a friendship to preserve, you have a greater tendency to work through your working problems.

What's the closest you've come to breaking up?
I guess it was around the solo time. It was never spoken that anyone was quitting or leaving, but there certainly was some tragic fatigue back then. And it occurred to me that when Greg went to make his solo record (in 1997) he might not come back—he'd walk into those woods and I'd never see him again.

Review | Bridget's (got) back, again



BRIDGET JONES. THE EDGE OF REASON
Renée Zellweger piled on the same 30 pounds that she gained for the original. But this time she looks less comfortable, squeezed like a sausage into a series of humiliating frocks, and situations, while Colin Firth and Hugh Grant act amused. Radical indie director Beeban Kidron has created a perversely backhanded feminist farce—in which English wit is outweighed by an extended fat joke.



POPCORN WITH MAPLE SYRUP
Subtitled *Film in Canada from Eh To Zed*, Peter Rowe's two-hour documentary (CBC, *Nov. 18, 8 p.m.*) is a rummage bin of neat stuff. We learn that Canadians gave the world its first onscreen kiss, first nude scene, and first movie star—Florence Lawrence, who also invented the brake light. But her death is right out of a Cronenberg movie—she killed herself by eating pest control poison.



RUFUS WAINWRIGHT, *WANT TWO*
Somehow the singer-songwriter has outdone himself. On the follow-up to his masterful *Want One* (released last fall), he's more classical than cabaret, but no less thoughtful and even more breathtaking. Although tough to narrow down, his finest moments are *Little Sister* and *Gay Messiah*—proving, yet again, that he does pretty pop like nobody else.
BRIAN D. JOHNSON AND JOHN INTINI

CELEBRITY HOMEMAKER Martha Stewart has asked her company to cover US$3.7 million of her legal expenses.

Theatre | Who will play the barking dog?

You can find him in any Canadian city—derelict, alcoholic, his eyes blazing with messages you'd rather not read. Such is Calum MacDonald, the homesick Cape Bretoner at the heart of **Alistair MacLeod**'s immensely popular novel *No Great Mischief*—powerfully adapted for the stage by **David Young** (*Glenn*) and directed by **Richard Rose** at Toronto's Tarragon Theatre (until Dec. 12). In a whirlwind of shape-shifting where chairs become boats and human beings play a dog, the cast effectively mines the passions and memories of the MacDonald clan. But it is **David Fox**'s Calum who rises frequently to greatness. To see Fox dance fiercely in the rain after the death of a loved one is to witness humanity's longings translated into vivid flesh. JOHN REMROSE



COURTESY OF WARNER MUSIC; COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL; COURTESY OF CHC; COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL



Betty White finishes John Intini's sentences

Betty White has been a TV comedy fixture for five decades, but is best known for her role as scatterbrain Rose on *The Golden Girls* (season one on DVD comes out next week). The five-time Emmy Award winner is a regular on the celebrity game show circuit and an advocate for animal-disease research. White, 82, finished *Maclean's* Assistant Editor **John Intini**'s sentences.

THE CLOSEST THING ON TV TO *THE GOLDEN GIRLS* THESE DAYS IS *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*. We were very popular with the gay community during our first run. At gay clubs across the country they'd shut the music down just to watch us.

GAME SHOWS ARE NOT THE CLEVER mental exercise they used to be. They practically give you the answers now.

THE HARSHEST CRITICISM I'VE EVER RECEIVED was from a man—whose name is forever etched in my brain—who said he gets sick of all my smiling.

MY FIRST PET was an orange marmalade cat my parents had when they brought me home from the hospital. I was told that if the cat hadn't approved of me, they would've sent me back.

TV COMEDY NEEDS more mature writers with a frame of reference.

YOU COULDN'T PAY ME ENOUGH to do a reality show. They're gross and not very witty. I really miss wit.

FOR MORE "JOHN INTINI'S SENTENCES" VISIT WWW.MACLEANS.CA/PEOPLE

ESSENTIAL WHITE

Emmy-winner for her role on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*

2. Played best friend Nylund on four TV shows—*The Golden Girls*, *Empty Nest*, *Nurses* and *The Golden Palace*

3. Declined a role in *As Good As It Gets* because she didn't like how the dog was treated in the film.

THE MOON BUGGY USED by Sean Connery in *Diamonds Are Forever* is expected to fetch as much as US$56,000 at auction next month

Books | Our modest national home

Few iconic houses have had as inauspicious a beginning as Ottawa's Rideau Hall. Built in 1838 by a prosperous Scottish stonemason, what Father of Confederation George Brown called "a miserable little house" was still dismaying its aristocratic British occupants on the eve of the Great War. But as award-winning historian Margaret MacMillan, one of three authors of *Canada's House*, shows, the Governor General's home has grown with the nation. Now occupied by Canadians, it's a spectacular showcase of art, furniture and design from every region of the country. *Canada's House* does the vice regal residence justice with dozens of new and archival photos. MacMillan's breezy anecdotal history, a tour of its classic northern style gardens by Marjorie Harris and Anne Desjardins' description of the Canadian cuisine served there (Fiddlehead and Miramichi bay lobster chowder with fried Nova Scotia sea parsley, anyone?



CANADA'S HOUSE
Margaret MacMillan
Marjorie Harris and Anne L. Desjardins
Knopf $55

BestSellers

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1.	THE DA VINCI CODE, Dan Brown (71)	5
2.	A COMPLICATED KINDNESS, Miriam Toews (21)	1
3.	I AM CHARLOTTE SIMMONS, Tom Wolfe (1)	
4.	ALL THAT MATTERS, Wayson Choy (5)	6
5.	RUNAWAY Alice Munro (7)	4
6.	THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN Mitch Albom (43)	8
7	THE SUNDAY PHILOSOPHY CLUB, Alexander McCall Smith (51	3
8.	ADULTERY Richard Wright (6)	9
9.	THE LINE OF BEAUTY Alan Hollinghurst (3)	2
10.	THE MEMORY ARTISTS, Jeffrey Moore (2)	7

Non-fiction

1.	EATS, SHOOTS AND LEAVES, Lynne Truss (27)	1
2.	THE MUSEUM CALLED CANADA, Charlotte Gray (3)	6
3.	CHRONICLES, VOLUME ONE, Bob Dylan (3)	3
4.	TO RULE THE WAVES, Arthur Herman (2)	7
5.	DARK AGE AHEAD, Jane Jacobs (23)	4
6.	IT'S THE CRUDE, DUDE, Linda McQuaig (1)	
7	WRONG WAY, Jacquie McNish and Sinclair Stewart (1)	
8.	THIS TERRIBLE BUSINESS HAS BEEN GOOD TO ME, Norman Jewison (1)	
9.	WORTH FIGHTING FOR, Sheila Copps (2)	2
10.	A SECRET TRIAL, William Kaplan (3)	10

() Weeks on list
Compiled by Brian Bethune

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Shanda Deziel | ON CONCERT-GOING



The wrong way to rock out

When it comes to crowd etiquette, moshing and making out are surefire show spoilers

IT'S A HALF-HOUR into the concert and the band still hasn't played your favourite song. Do you (a) wait patiently and enjoy the set, (b) yell out your request once or twice when the room is quiet, or (c) shout your request *constantly*, along with your buddies, while shooting the lead singer the finger as he tries to ignore you?

As a fellow concertgoer, I beg you to go with (a), as (b) is embarrassing and (c), of course, is unfathomable—but has happened to Chris Murphy, bassist/front man for the Canadian rock group Sloan. "At one Memorial University show, all I could hear was a bunch of engineering students chanting the name of our first single. They were giving me the finger and screaming, 'You better f– ing play *Underwhelmed*!' " The band did—but not before having the lights turned on and the riff raff kicked out.

When it comes to rock-show audience etiquette, calling out requests is a commonly broken rule, but it's hardly the worst. As much as I don't want to hear what you have to say to the band, I'm really not interested in the conversation you're having with your buddy over top of the music. Whether it's your thoughts on that cute redhead near the front or your obvious observation that Sloan's latest album is heavily influenced by AC/DC, save it for the walk home.

Here's another thing that can wait until later: groping. "When you're in a crowded, standing room-only show and a couple starts to get amorous—totally gross," says MuchMusic personality and regular concertgoer Hannah Sung. "You're standing all crammed together and if a couple starts making out, we're all making out." Similarly, you pack of girls trying to get the band's attention with your exposed cleavage and suggestive dancing, give it up. They can't see you, the light is in their eyes. I, on the other hand, just felt you writhing up against my back.

But all this pales in comparison to the body-slammers. Some shows are born with mosh pits—it's a given at a Metallica gig—others have mosh pits thrust upon them. "At a big show," says Murphy, "the front of a crowd might be all young kids or all girls and then about four songs in it's all jocks and meatheads who have pushed their way there." In the past, Murphy's spent a great deal of time trying to reason with the aggressors—but now he tries to ignore them. "I also don't think it's as bad anymore," he says. "Maybe in small towns young kids are still anxious to crowd surf, but you don't get a lot of it in New York City or Toronto, where everybody is over it."

On a lighter etiquette note, holding up your Bics is also over. These days, when a band kicks into the power ballad, thousands of cellphones are thrust into the air, creating a sea of blue light. "It's actually quite beautiful," says Murphy. That said, if you pull cellphones out at a concert to talk, take pictures or record the show to your answering machine, you're most likely annoying the person beside you. Unless that person is busy calling out "*Freebird*"—in which case, you deserve each other.



To comment: shanda.deziel@macleans.rogers.com

Style | An iPod interface-lift

Given the iPod's sleek, minimalist design, it was only a matter of time before the style set started dressing it up. Now, a whole range of options helps you transform your iPod into a personal fashion statement.



TEMPORARY TATTOOS

With Hewlett Packard's new removable iPod "tattoos," you can change the look of your MP3 player as often as you change clothes. At *www.hp.com*, you can download wraparound graphics and images designed by fashion darlings Derek Lam and Proenza Schouler, as well as rock stars like Gwen Stefani and The Hives. HP sticker paper required (US$14.99 for 10 sheets).



DESIGNER CASES

By now, almost all of fashion's biggest stars have added an iPod case to their collections. Paul Smith's features bold, multicoloured waves (US$115). Kate Spade sells a fuchsia faux-croc leather model (US$55). For something a little more classic, Burberry offers cases in its signature plaid (US$195).



CUSTOM JOBS

Recently, Apple teamed with U2 to release the special edition black and red iPod U2 (US$349). Or for those with serious cash to burn, California-based AVA Computers will customize iPods in gold and platinum. (The one they made for P. Diddy was encrusted with 120 diamonds.) And yes, it also plays music. LIANNE GEORGE

ILLUSTRATION BY LUC LATULIPPE

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Money's Worth | Faux firelogs

Some like it hot—and crackling

How do you create that "happy fireside clime" which, according to Robbie Burns is the "true pathos and sublime of human life"? First, you gather your loved ones 'round the hearth on a cold winter's night. Then—assuming, like most of us, you're too lazy, busy or unskilled to build a roaring wood fire—you spark up a store-bought firelog for an immediate blaze that requires no tending. Contrary to popular perception, firelogs are an eco-friendly choice. On average, they emit 88 per cent less carbon monoxide, fewer toxic compounds, and half the smoke of regular wood. The latest firelogs produce little or no odour and do less damage to your chimney. Some even have compelling hi-tech features. Duraflame's Crackleflame log makes "authentic" crackling sounds and its EasyTime Colorlog burns in "festive" multi-coloured flames. We compared four popular varieties for flame quality, odour and special effects. VALERIE MARCHANT

THE VERDICT: Nothing can replace the scent of well-seasoned wood, and the satisfaction of tossing another log onto a low-burning fire. Still, firelogs are a respectable substitute. And you can feel safer using them: they've been proven to leave less creosote buildup, which is a primary cause of chimney fires.

OUR PICK: Sawdust-based Java-Log is simple, but it delivers tall, hot flames and makes innovative use of waste headed for landfill.



What's in Store

Burning a Duraflame Flue Renew firelog ($7.99) in your wood stove or open-hearth fire once a month will help reduce the creosote buildup in your chimney by transforming the sticky substance into a dry material that flakes away. (Don't get too excited—a proper chimney cleaning is still required at least once a year.)

	NORTHLAND BY CONROS, $2.99	CRACKLEFLAME BY DURAFLAME, $3.99	EASYTIME COLORLOG BY DURAFLAME, $3.09	JAVA-LOG BY ROBUSTION, $4.99
COMPOSITION	Sawdust, petroleum wax, trace of molasses and a "patented additive."	Sawdust, petroleum wax, and seeds that produce a crackling sound.	Sawdust, petroleum wax and a copper-based colouring agent.	Recycled coffee grounds, wood and vegetable by-products.
ODOUR	A slight waxy smell.	A faint scent of coffee, which may please or offend.	None discernable.	None discernable.
OBSERVATIONS	Produces a decent fire, but flames are sparse and insufficiently thrilling.	The crackle of the log is audible but gentle enough to seem natural. The flames burn densely and brightly for two hours, then flicker for another hour or so.	The only unusual colour it produces is an intense turquoise that appears after the log has been lit for a while. A nice touch, but not as dramatic as the packaging suggests.	Flames are tall and hot for about an hour. Then the fire continues to burn in a less intense, though still satisfying, way.
RECOMMENDED FOR	Fire-building on a budget.	A romantic night in, accompanied by some red wine and a little Marvin Gaye on the stereo.	Entertaining the whole family. (Note: toasting marshmallows over EasyTime Colorlog—or any firelog—*not* recommended.)	Eco-friendly consumers who appreciate a more traditional fire, minus the hassle.

TIP: To avoid a peculiar stench of mixed odors, clear away the debris from your last firelog before lighting a different brand in your fireplace.



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THE REVERSE BRAIN DRAIN

Americans are discovering new freedoms and opportunity—in Canada

IT'S HAPPENING just the way Conrad Black always told me it would. Talent is fleeing a land of political instability, mounting debt and deficits. Speculators in red suspenders, leading a global flight to quality, have pummeled the dollar.

The only problem is, there seems to be some confusion about the direction of the promised brain drain. It's starting to look kinda south to north. Which happens to be the same way the Niagara River flows. (Note to Americans who might be reading: that's an inside joke. You'll learn.)



George W. Bush's re-election has spooked untold numbers of blue-state Americans—literally untold: there's no way to tell how many of them are serious—into considering a move to chillier climes. Within days of the U.S. presidential election, articles in *Salon*, *New York* magazine and *Slate* were counselling the great republic's disaffected liberals on the fine points of Canada's immigration system. Canadian immigration lawyers are swamped with calls from would-be American clients, political refugees willing to move north with nothing but their J. Crew shirts, their Xboxes and their iPods as mementoes of their suddenly hostile homeland.

Meanwhile, as Steve Maich told you here last week, the dollar has had a lousy year—but it's the U.S. dollar, the fabled greenback, taking a beating. Our own plucky loonie has risen to the point where, if this trend keeps up, it might one day be worth a dollar.

So if the re-elected U.S. President ever gets around to visiting Ottawa, we should reserve him a warm welcome. Paul Martin, having struggled, with limited success, to keep Canada cool, the task fell to an unlikely servant: George W. Bush. And he has delivered in spades.

But there is more going on here than a few weedy campus radicals pining for Vancouver the way they might once have pined for Beijing or Havana. Leave aside, if it's even possible, the politics of President Bush's Iraq war. There are other factors at work that make it easy for the American creative class to consider leaving—and likelier that they might consider Canada a destination of choice.

"The United States of America—for generations known around the world as the land of opportunity and innovation—is on the verge of losing its competitive edge," Richard Florida, the Hirst professor of public policy at Virginia's George Mason University, wrote in the October *Harvard Business Review*.

"A host of countries—Ireland, Finland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand among them—are investing in higher education, cultivating creative people, and churning out stellar products." Florida notes that immigrants are already represented more highly in Canada's and Australia's populations than in his own country's. The "creative class," as Florida defines it, is a higher fraction of our workforce than of the American workforce.

And international students—whom Florida calls "the canaries of the talent mine" because they are a "leading indicator of global talent flows"—feel dramatically less welcome in the United States and more willing to look elsewhere. "For the first time in its history, then, the United States is facing the possibility of a reverse brain drain. And students are only the tip of the iceberg."

Canada, a land long hospitable to icebergs, is already seeing some of that grad-student action. University administrators in Quebec and British Columbia told me last week they have noticed a spike in interest both from American grad students and from bright kids in other countries who've decided they might not want to study at Stanford or MIT after all.

Again, the trend is hard to measure. It's terribly naive to think Canada is our neighbour's only competitor. And as Robert Lacroix at the Université de Montréal told me, any serious long-term decline in the research leadership of the United States would be more devastating to Canada's research community than a temporary grad-student influx would be helpful. So there's no need to crow.

Still. With all its flaws, our country is winning admiring reviews. I have here a report from Standard & Poor's which says closer economic integration with the U.S. hasn't kept Canada from enjoying "considerable autonomy in designing (social) policies." Which means Canada's growing prosperity has allowed us to afford a measure of sovereignty. Apparently it makes us attractive to prospective visitors.

Canada has its share of problems. There'll be time to lament them later. But during a tough week, many of our neighbours looked north and felt envy. What a surprising end to a wild campaign. M

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Read Paul Wells's Weblog, "Inkless Wells," at *www.macleans.ca/paulwells*

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SHIFT

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